

THE 2005 LOTUS WORLD MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL:
PROCESSES OF PRODUCTION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF
SPATIAL LIMINALITY

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I became involved with the Lotus Festival almost as soon as I arrived in Bloomington in the late summer of 2001. I had just moved from Washington, D.C. and a position with the National Council for the Traditional Arts, and my friends there had advised me to keep an eye out for “this great little festival” that they’d heard of. So, with my furniture barely situated in my new apartment, I gave the Lotus office a call and was quickly set to work helping to make flight reservations for a particularly VIP artist. And thus began the journey...but it was hardly a journey that I took alone, and I am so grateful to the people I met along the way. . .

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The dissertation explores the role of space in the production and perception of meaning in the cultural performance genre of festival, using a case-study approach centered on the production of the 2005 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival in Bloomington, Indiana. The study expands the notion of “festival” far beyond the four days of its enactment and encompasses the festival’s year-long production process, one significant element of which is how producers conceive and manipulate space to mobilize a “global” festival within a local geography. Drawing on data gathered via ethnographic methods such as interview and participant-observation, the dissertation analyzes the ways in which spatial considerations play into production decisions and become essential components of a uniquely “festivalized” and liminal participant experience. This study emphasizes space as an actor and prioritizes the affective role of space vis-à-vis the construction of meaning in festival contexts, and its conclusions examine how festival producers use spatial transformations, inversions, and juxtapositions to create powerful loci of ambiguity and symbolic tension.

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Situating the Study: An Overview

Introduction

For the last 12 years, the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival in Bloomington, Indiana, has brought musical performers from around the globe to a small southern Indiana university town. Normally spanning a four-day long weekend in late September or early October, the festival has invited roughly 30 “world music” artists each year to share their sounds with several thousand audience members in downtown venues that range from tents to theaters to churches. Despite its sonic “globalness,” however, the festival has been sited and produced entirely in Bloomington, by a local non-profit agency employing hundreds of local volunteers to create the event using local facilities. Further, like many festivals, this popular event has not happened spontaneously or overnight, but rather has been the product of year-long vision, negotiations, and effort on the part of numerous institutions and individuals.

Filling several critical gaps in existing scholarship on the genre of “festival,” this dissertation will present a case-study of the 2005 Lotus Festival which de-centers the festival event in favor of a focus on this extensive production process—the intentional, goal-oriented interaction of people and resources that Beverly Stoeltje calls the “organization of production” (Stoeltje 1993)—that, crucially, temporally and spatially expands the notion of “festival” as a study object. Orienting this exploration of process will be the physical sitedness of this “global” festival and the local spaces in which the festival is staged. Specifically, this study will draw on descriptions and examples from the production process to illustrate the ways in which spatial considerations comprised a significant component of production decisions, and theoretical analysis will focus on how the physical and symbolic transformation of space and place created sites of the liminality which characterizes festival. Existing scholarship in this area tends to acknowledge spatial boundedness as a factor in cultural performance, but then typically leaves space behind to focus on liminality as the social-behavioral manifestations of principles such as inversion and juxtaposition. This study will instead position space as an actor—as having a dynamic, dialogic role in the way meaning is constructed, rather than just being a passive setting for behavior and discourse—and prioritize the affective role of space vis-à-vis the construction of meaning in festival contexts. My analyses will examine the concept of “spatial liminality” and theorize the ways in which festival producers used spatial transformations, inversions, and juxtapositions to create powerful loci of ambiguity and symbolic tension.

Conceptual Context: World Music and the Festival Genre

The consideration of a world music festival involves first unpacking several layers of contingency and interrelationship—specifically, the concepts of “world music” and “festival” and the ways in which these ideas have been constructed and treated in social and scholarly discourse. This section will provide an overview of these two concepts and position the phenomenon of a “world music festival” in the midst of existing scholarship on both world music and festival, identifying critical gaps in the literature as well as some productive suggestions for further engagement. This brief intellectual history will provide the foundation for the subsequent segue into the design of the present study, using these ideas to illustrate and situate the importance of space as a conceptual focal point for this dissertation and providing some basic theoretical and practical arguments for the significance of spatial considerations.

World Music

First, there is the problem of “world music” itself, in terms of its definition as a macro-genre and the structures that both enable and constrain its creation and circulation as a form of expressive culture. Although used previously by ethnomusicologists to discuss the various musical styles and genres of the world’s peoples or to provide a distinction between Western and non-Western musical forms (see, for example, Nettl 1985), the term “world music” (along with corollary terms such as “world beat” and “world fusion”) emerged in the 1980s as a generic category designed to give record stores a labeled rack on which to place the African and other non-Western music albums that

were beginning to grow in popularity in the United States and Western Europe. The category subsequently took on a life of its own, and it first appeared as a *Billboard* chart in 1990 (Taylor 1997: 2-3).

With no defining musical attributes, and few other defining characteristics beyond the country of origin (non-Western) of its performers or rhythmic/melodic components,¹ world music is largely an “othering” category that is more discourse than genre. Since the emergence of world music as a music-marketing category, ethnomusicological attention to this phenomenon has varied considerably in scope and thrust. Some scholars have raised the question of cultural imperialism and examined world music under the lens of globalization, considering music in terms of concerns about homogenization, tradition, and authenticity, and looking at the ways in which market forces have shaped music production. Others scholars have studied notions of exoticism, exploitation, and resistance as they are sonically and socially manifested, and still others have seen value in studying how artists have experienced this new genre, considering such issues as musical hybridity and creativity, ethnic identity, and cross-cultural influences and interactions.²

Generally speaking, scholarship on the discourses of world music has tended to focus on the role of artists and performers in this category, with an almost exclusive

¹ The identification of “world music” based on the ethnic origin of musical components, more appropriate to “fusion” efforts, also has differing implications depending on the nationality or ethnicity of the artist using those components—Western artists who “borrow” non-Western elements may not fall into the “world music” category (Taylor 1997, Feld 1994a and 1994b).

² This range of scholarly arguments appears not only in discussions of “world music,” but also in works on globalization more generally; many works provide good overviews of the various positions. See, for example: Appadurai 1996, Erlmann 1996 and 1998, Feld 1994a and 1994b, Friedman 1994, Garofalo 1993, Goodwin and Gore 1990, Guilbault 1993 and 1997, Laing 1986, Lipsitz 1994, Miller 1995, Nettl 1985, Parkhill 1993, Robinson et al. 1991, Taylor 1997, Tomlinson 1991, and Urban 2001.

emphasis on the various dimensions of sonic production, particularly within the framework of the global recording industry. For example, some authors have treated such aspects as the recording studio (Meintjes 2003), the collection or collaborative efforts of artists outside a particular musical tradition, or statistics on album sales (Taylor 1997). Further, investigations have tended to center on sonic analysis of materially commodified formats such as recorded albums, with a secondary emphasis on how world music is marketed through the use of certain labels and descriptors. There are, however, many other forces besides musical production operating in the circulation of the discourses of world music, and it is impossible to talk about how the global “market” is affecting the world’s music without identifying and exploring the other facets of that market. Overall, though, little scholarly attention has been paid to the presentation and consumption of world music and the impact of these aspects on discourse and meaning.

One major format for such presentation and consumption is the world music festival, a phenomenon whose popularity has roughly paralleled the rise of world music as a genre. Modeled after such productions as the WOMAD (World of Music and Dance) festivals which were presented around the world starting in 1982,³ world music festival events began to crop up, usually in major metropolitan areas with diverse

³ WOMAD’s website briefly gives the organization’s history as follows: “WOMAD stands for World of Music, Arts and Dance, expressing the central aim of the WOMAD festival—to bring together and to celebrate many forms of music, arts and dance drawn from countries and cultures all over the world. WOMAD was originally inspired by Peter Gabriel: ‘Pure enthusiasm for music from around the world led us to the idea of WOMAD in 1980 and thus to the first WOMAD festival in 1982. The festivals have always been wonderful and unique occasions and have succeeded in introducing an international audience to many talented artists. Equally important, the festivals have also allowed many different audiences to gain an insight into cultures other than their own through the enjoyment of music. Music is a universal language, it draws people together and proves, as well as anything, the stupidity of racism.’ As an organisation, WOMAD now works in many different ways, but our aims are always the same - at festivals, performance events, through recorded releases and through educational projects, we aim to excite, to inform, and to create awareness of the worth and potential of a multicultural society.” Available from <http://www.womad.org/>, cited 25 October 2005.

populations, and have generally been characterized by the large-scale multi-venue/multi-stage presentation of a number of world music artists over the course of one or several days, often in tents or existing structures in downtown urban areas. Surprisingly, however, beyond brief mentions of such festivals in longer articles or books on world music, there has been little to no serious scholarly engagement with such events as a component of the world music “scene”⁴ or the ways in which these events operate as sites where meaning is constructed vis-à-vis world music. Some scholars have addressed specific festivals that may include non-Western musics but are not presented under the “world music” banner (i.e., “folk” or “traditional” festivals such as the Smithsonian Folklife Festival [formerly the Festival of American Folklife], see for example Kurin 1998, Bauman et al. 1992, Titon 1999, Sommers 1994, Whisnant 1979).

While this body of work provides some useful theoretical frameworks and implicates pertinent issues pertaining to the presentation of non-Western musics in a public format, gaps remain. For example, this work again tends to focus largely on the experience of the performer in these contexts; further, “world music” is a distinct concept with a distinct discourse that may not articulate entirely with these other festival genres. In terms of world music, therefore, I quickly identified a need for exploration of the genre as it is manifested outside of the realm of sonic production, broadening the focus to include the ways in which live, non-album presentations and consumption function as part of the world music scene and participate in the discourse surrounding this genre.

⁴ Webster’s dictionary defines “scene” as a slang term meaning “a sphere of activity.” I find this to be a good working definition that incorporates and gives a dimension of relationship to the spaces (venues, studios, albums, performance sites, etc.) and participants (artists, consumers, fans, promoters, festival producers, sound engineers, etc.) involved in “world music.”

The phenomenon of the “world music festival” is one example of this type of presentation and consumption, and it offers a spatially- and temporally-sensible concretization and coming-together of the many different constituencies—artists, producers, middlemen, consumers—who participate in the production of meaning vis-à-vis world music.

Festival

To cast a net more broadly, however, a rich body of literature does exist on the topic of festival in general, as well as related genres of cultural performance (see Bauman 1992) such as spectacle, celebration, fair, and religious ritual. Scholars have characterized such events as scheduled, structured, public, participatory, and embodying multiple voices and meanings (see, for example, Bauman 1992; Stoeltje 1989, 1993, and in Bauman 1992; Turner 1982; MacAloon 1984; Karp and Lavine 1991; Smith 1972); this literature also emphasizes the various roles of social structures and social identities in understanding the enactment of meaning in such events. Existing scholarly definitions and analyses of the genre of “festival,” specifically, reveal some helpful basic frameworks for thinking about this type of cultural performance.

For example, Robert J. Smith, writing as part of Richard Dorson’s *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, leads off the “Social Folk Custom” section of that book by characterizing festivals as “recurring moments of special significance” that are filled with celebration. He goes on to emphasize this latter point by noting that since festivals often persist even when their original purpose or meaning has been forgotten, it is the element of celebration that is of “enduring significance.” He also considers festivals to be

“periodic times of escape from work.” This notion of escape is in keeping with the notion of celebration, and he attaches this periodicity to seasonal or religious calendars, noting that festivals generally occur annually on a relatively fixed date (Smith 1972:160-64). Later in his article, Smith makes distinctions between general participation and limited participation festivals and states that participation in festival is simultaneously sanctioned by and constitutive of membership in a particular community—in fact, he sees festival as efficacious in ensuring the continuity of the group. This illustrates one possible experience a festival participant might have—a feeling of solidarity or (re)affirmation of community (Smith 1972:164, 170). Finally, Smith emphasizes the affective domain of festival, and he recognizes festival structure as symbolically complex and necessarily comprised of multiple genres and performance types, often including ritual/ceremony, feast, music and dance, costume, and storytelling (Smith 1972:168-70).

In the introduction to his 1983 edited work, *The Celebration of Society*, Frank Manning also considers the celebratory aspects of festival in a more complex way, noting the tension between the ritual and the ludic that gives festival its affective power (Manning 1983:7). He chooses to also accentuate the dimension of power, suggesting the ways in which festival and celebration can “articulate and modify power relations” (Manning 1983:6). This notion draws heavily on Victor Turner’s ideas about liminality and the potential for reversals and reorderings in social dramatic processes (Turner 1982), as participants in festival and celebration simultaneously experience a reflection of existing social hierarchies as well as a model for potential realignments. John MacAloon also has comments about festival. Most notably, he, like Smith, attaches to festival the

primary necessity of a “joyous mood” and “celebration,” and he delves into the etymology to make his point:

The English word “festival” derives from the Latin *festivus* “gay, merry, lighthearted” and from the noun *festum* “festival” or “festival time.” The latter is used specifically for the great Roman feasts, such as the *Lupercalia*, *Lemuria*, *Saturnalia*, and *Vestalia*. Congruently, the dictionary defines “festival” as both a certain “joyous mood” and as “a time of celebration marked by special observances . . . a program of public festivity.” (MacAloon 1984:246)

Later in his article, MacAloon also characterizes festival as having internal and external “boundaries of space, time, and intention” (MacAloon 1984:149).

Beverly Stoeltje, writing in 1992, probes more deeply into the concept of festival, largely maintaining the outline proposed by Smith but also performing a closer analysis of the issues of reversal and power. She, too, characterizes festivals as calendrically-regulated, public and participatory, community-based, semiotically complex, and combining individual and group performance types. In addition, Stoeltje echoes and elaborates on Smith’s sense of festivals in historic perspective and persistence over time, noting that festivals are often survivals of indigenous ritual that was subsequently displaced by “official” religion that regulated such rites to a more peripheral position (Stoeltje 1992:261-62). In this, she locates festivals rather indeterminately between the sacred and secular and makes many of the same ancient/modern distinctions that underlie Turner’s liminal/liminoid divisions (Turner 1982). Along these same lines, Stoeltje notes the active engagement of participants and a “shift in frames” from everyday life to “frames which foster the transformative, reciprocal, and reflexive dimensions of social life.” She ties this specifically to Turner’s notions of liminality and discusses how festival, existing within this liminal frame, thrives on social inversion as well as the

enactment or juxtaposition of alternatives to existing norms and laws (Stoeltje 1992:263, 268-270). In the festival mode, participants can experience finite realms of reversal—for example, a beauty pageant or queen-crowning event can temporarily shift gender hierarchies, or a carnival troupe might have license to enact types of chaos, antagonism, and humor that would ordinarily fall outside the bounds of social acceptance (see Stoeltje and Bauman 1989; Lavenda 1992). Regarding festival structure, Stoeltje characterizes the various component activities of festival as occurring in an set or agreed-upon order; in her view, these components generally include an opening and closing ceremony as well as other types of ritual; drama or contest; procession or parade; feast; and dance and music.

A summary of these different scholarly positions seems to reveal the most significant features of festival to be:

- An annual cycle
- The secularization of religiously-connected rites (and a corollary association with a collective past)
- Polyvocal and active participation based on membership in a particular community
- An ordered structure of component parts
- Explicit framing in time and space.

Other possibilities include liminality via the “licensed relaxation of norms and rules” (Stoeltje 1992:270), as well as a certain sense of joy or celebration. It is significant to note that most scholarship on festival, including that cited here, tends to approach festival through neatly packaged events which happen at specific places and times—the “day-of” manifestation of festival. This focus on the final performance of the event results in far

less (or no) attention to the distinct components of intentional *production* which lead up to the final, public enactment. These events don't just spontaneously *happen*, but rather there are numerous negotiations, manipulations, mediations, and representational choices that take place among artists, event coordinators and other "middlemen," the community in which the event takes place, and the audience which attends.

World music festivals, like many other public festival events, combine musical, economic, social, geographical, and individual processes, to varying degrees. They are produced events that are "curated," in a manner of speaking, in a certain place and time and are comprised of an assemblage of performances, participants, and spaces that are selected and managed to a specific end. In spite of extensive literature in museology that addresses curatorial issues in museum exhibitions, analyses of these processes are conspicuously lacking in the available scholarship on festivals and other cultural performance genres. A few scholars have called attention to the "phase structure" of performance and have devoted research to defining and illuminating pre-performance processes as part of this system (Schechner 1985, Bauman and Ritch 1994, Bauman 1996).⁵ While some of this work suggests the involvement of non-performers in the production process, however, it is largely focused on rehearsals and other activities undertaken by those who will appear publicly in the final event. Somewhat more inclusive is Beverly Stoeltje's work on American rodeo, which calls for the incorporation of an even wider range of pre-performance factors into considerations of these genres and notes the entire "organization of production" as a meaningful factor that deserves more

⁵ For example, Schechner posited a seven-part theater-oriented system of training, workshops, rehearsals, warm-ups, performance, cool-down, and aftermath; Bauman cites this model in his discussion of *coloquio* in Mexico and the phases of copying scripts, learning parts, and several levels of rehearsal.

attention in terms of its relationship to the circulation of discourses that surround such events (Stoeltje 1993).

World Music Festivals and Issues of Space and Place

When ideas about world music and festival come together in the notion of a “world music festival,” one area where intriguing questions arise is in the consideration of issues of place and space. As noted earlier, world music has been treated as a global phenomenon that exists primarily in the realm of discourse, comprised of a geographically- and culturally-diffuse network of people, places, and various sonic and social identities and relationships. Further, recorded media circulates in a completely abstracted space that is only indexically evocative of place, through the use of sound, language, and potentially images. These representations all tap into what Appadurai called “landscapes,” and it is arguable that the notion of “world music” as a genre is part of his conception of imagined and partly-imagined spaces called “ethnoscapes” and “mediascapes”—landscapes constructed and enabled by a contemporary world characterized by deterritorialized electronic mass media, and human mass migration and movement (Appadurai 1996:33-36). These landscapes are “imagined worlds . . . the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe;” these worlds can reflect as well as contest or subvert “official” constructions (Appadurai 1996:33). World music *festivals*, however, do not (at least on the surface) occupy imaginary or purely discursive realms. Rather, they take place in physically sensible, “real” places and spaces—sited, local contexts that must be taken into consideration when thinking about meaning vis-à-vis these events. In

addition, although musicians and audiences spend just a few days at the festival site, these places are meticulously prepared for their arrival in a process that can begin up to a year in advance and involves production participants from the local community.

Thus, local space and local place become important factors in the consideration of world music festivals, as a discourse of “globalness” is layered onto the physical and social landscape of the festival’s host city. As such, those existing, local notions of space and place represent useful points of departure for theoretical analysis. This chapter has already noted the ways in which literature on festival typically cites the importance of spatial boundedness and a sense of transformation and license that characterizes festival-ness, but few scholars in anthropology or folklore/ethnomusicology have dealt with how space actually functions vis-à-vis festival—how space is selected, bounded, transformed, and intentionally deployed as a setting conducive to liminal experience and transgressive festival behavior. Space and place, however, have long been a primary concern for scholars of geography, such as Henri Lefebvre and Yi-Fu Tuan, and these perspectives provide a useful framework for considering space and place as meaningful notions that both effect and are products of experience and socio-cultural processes (in a dialectical relationship). In these views, space is actor as opposed to merely stage, and it plays an important affective role in the production of meaning. Therefore, I would like to argue for the application of these theoretical frameworks within the context of festival, on the premise that it is vital to consider how festival (or festivalized) space is produced as well as how produced festival space functions relative to the liminality that characterizes festival. World music festival emerges as a logical and intriguing subject for such an

investigation, on the basis of the ways in which they draw attention to concerns of space and place via their dramatization of the articulation of global and local processes.

Study Design: Research Questions, Study Object, and Methods

The present study of festival space emerged as a rich site of overlap between my two primary initial goals: to add festival events to the scholarly discourse on world music, and to provide a model for considering festival-as-process by approaching the genre of festival through Stoeltje's framework of the "organization of production" (Stoeltje 1993). Given the unique intersections of global and local place manifested by the idea of a world music festival, as noted above, the following research questions evolved:

- How does the process of festival production articulate with local space?
- How are festival spaces created and shaped into sites conducive to liminal experience?

In short, does space matter? In designing the study, I proposed to apply Stoeltje's principles of the relationship among form, production, and discourse (Stoeltje 1993) and examine the process of festival production and the intentional construction of a "festivalized" physical and discursive space for the consumption of world music.

Opting for an in-depth case-study approach, I took as my study object the 2005 event and production process of the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival which occurred in Bloomington, Indiana, a medium-sized city that is home to Indiana University. According to preliminary research carried out in October-November 2003, I determined the Lotus Festival to be a representative example of a successful, small, world music festival, based on the size of its producing organization and the size of its participating

audience. In order to consider it a “successful” festival, for the initial design of this project I took into account its continued existence for (then) 10 years and its continued growth over that period—from 1994 ticket sales of 775 to 2003 ticket sales of 5907 (estimated audiences are slightly larger, based on the fact that many volunteers attend but do not purchase tickets; in 1994 the audience was estimated at 1,000 and in 2003 at 10,000). In addition, the organization staff had participated actively in world music conferences and networks such as WOMEX, FolkAlliance, APAP, and Strictly Mundial and as such Lotus was considered a legitimate festival within those organizational criteria.

A multi-day, multi-venue event that took place in downtown Bloomington, the Lotus Festival (as it was commonly known) utilized a combination of indoor and outdoor venues to feature a wide variety of world music artists. The event was organized by a small, local, not-for-profit organization called the Lotus Education and Arts Foundation (LEAF), and it was a ticketed event—audience members purchased a wristband and had access to all venues for the duration of each evening, with the freedom to come and go at will. Festival components typically included performance showcases, parades, visual art elements, and food and drink.⁶ (Please see Chapter 2 for more detailed information about the festival and its locale, including an introduction to Bloomington, a history of the festival, and a snapshot of its present manifestation.) At the time of this study in 2004-2005, the festival was in its twelfth year.

⁶ The inclusion of multiple performance types and other generic components is one factor which identifies this event as falling into the genre classification of “festival.” Other supporting factors are its annual occurrence, public and participatory structure, and community-based character.

Past experience with the Lotus Festival as a four-year Bloomington resident and festival volunteer (as well as past professional experience in festival production in the Washington D.C. area) helped me identify the festival production process as a year-long series of activities leading up to the final event. As such, I undertook to conduct qualitative, ethnographic fieldwork over the course of the entire production cycle for the 2005 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival, as well as at the 2005 festival event; this cycle actually started with the 2004 festival and its aftermath and continued through the next festival event in September 2005, with follow-up from that event continuing into October 2005. The research therefore involved two distinct phases—festival production and the actual festival event—that necessarily involved two distinct sets of methods. However, all methods were linked by my emphasis on developing a constructionist, phenomenological, experiential understanding of the entire process (see, for example, Merleau-Ponty 1945, Schutz 1964 and 1976); therefore, individual interviews were crucial throughout, and I attempted to allow the ideas, opinions, and experiences of my consultants to guide what emerged as “important” to explore in the fieldwork process. Multiple methods and consultants provided checks and balances throughout the process.

During the production phase, I began by participating in the “debriefing” meeting following the 2004 festival, observing and audiotaping that meeting. At that time, I also identified key production participants and conducted some initial interviews to gain an overview sense for production as a whole and to ascertain a participant-identified phase structure for the planning process. During the winter and early-spring months, a production period with little visible activity, I met with LEAF’s Executive Director, Lee Williams, at least once per week to discuss production progress; in this time I also

conducted interviews with 2004 festival attendees to hear their post-festival reactions and feedback. When festival committees began meeting in late spring and early summer 2005, I attended and audio-recorded (or reviewed minutes from) all committee meetings. I also interviewed key committee members and others that were identified to me as important participants, past or present. Though I continued my regular interviews with Lee during this time, these became less frequent as committee processes became more and more central.

In the summer of 2005, during the most intensive phase of festival preparation, I shifted into a research mode that was primarily participant-observation, continuing to attend and record all committee meetings but also holding the organization's Festival Production Assistant position, a part-time internship position that is created annually to satisfy the need for extra personnel. This position is largely administrative, comprised of such responsibilities as scheduling, handling artist logistics, and liaising with artists on publicity and technical concerns. From June to September, therefore, I became a productive, contributing member of the LEAF staff and had a daily presence in their main office, a position I believe provided an ideal vantage point for understanding and experiencing the intricacies of the production process. During this entire first phase of research, which lasted from September 2004 until early September 2005, I also gathered and analyzed festival-related articles from local newspapers, email communications among production participants, LEAF websites and marketing materials, and production documents such as lists, grids, maps, charts, meeting minutes, budgets, or other data forms.

At the 2005 Lotus Festival, I shifted into my second phase of research and employed several different methods for understanding what occurs at this multi-day, multi-site event where many components happen simultaneously.⁷ First, I participated in the event as an audience member and used primarily written notes to record my festival experience. My personal observations of festival components were supplemented by observations of and informal, non-recorded interviews with other festival participants, including audience members, festival staff and volunteers; I also observed participant use of festival space, according to the specific areas of focus that emerged in the course of my first phase of research. Second, however, given the size and simultaneity of the event, I also chose to recruit and use the help of research assistants. Composed primarily of social-science graduate students with prior experience in qualitative research, this corps of eight assistants was assigned various points for observation as well as qualitative interview questions to ask random and anonymous festival participants; each assistant conducted 15-20 short interviews, which were audio-recorded, and one assistant helped with still photography of and in various festival spaces. Finally, after the 2005 festival event, I conducted follow-up interviews with key production participants and attended and recorded the 2005 debriefing meeting. I also collected and analyzed festival-related articles from various local newspapers.

⁷ Festival components included musical performances, presenter speeches, workshops, Q&A sessions, lectures, parades, food sales, visual arts displays, fundraising events, merchandise sales, hospitality areas, private parties, non-festival-sponsored jam sessions, etc.

A Note

As my research progressed and issues began to emerge from my initial research questions, I quickly realized that some of my original goals were unrealistic in scope. In considering *world* music festivals, specifically, I had hoped to use the investigation of local space/place as an entry point into considering larger, broader issues of meaning and identity, especially in terms of how notions like a “local identity” and “local community” articulated with the “globalness” of world music in the context of transformed or symbolic festival space. My explorations, however, quickly showed me that such questions, while intriguing and important, were premature—given the twofold problems of a lack of available descriptive data on world music festivals (for comparative purposes) as well as almost no focused treatment of issues of space in festival theory, I began to feel strongly that a greater priority was to demonstrate the significance and importance of inviting space into the basic analytical equation. This study, therefore, focuses on supplying a model for thinking about affective space vis-à-vis festival, and it suggests a method for approaching the question of how the sited-ness of world music festivals and issues of space might inform the articulation of local and global as a locus of meaning in these events. The concluding chapter of this dissertation will revisit some of my initial thoughts about meaning and identity, exploring these possibilities under the rubric of ideas for further research.

Overview of the Dissertation: Chapters and Terms

My research has shown that the subject of space is central to numerous Lotus Festival production practices, and that what I have come to call “spatial liminality” was

constructed through processes of negotiation and decision-making on the part of festival producers. Specifically, this dissertation will illustrate how the principle of juxtaposition (long noted as a principle of festival liminality) was crucial to the festivalization of space, and that spatial liminality was achieved when producers created a state of tension and ambiguity by mapping, sometimes quite literally, transformed space onto familiar space. As such, this transformed space was not completely altered or symbolically reconfigured—the familiar remained and provided a point of reference for the transformation. In this way, to borrow a concept from Richard Schechner, the resulting “festival space” was simultaneously “here,” “not-here,” and “not-not-here” (Schechner 1985). I would argue that this constructed juxtaposition of familiar and transformed space contributed to and enabled the affect of festival, characterized by ambiguity and what Stoeltje calls a “shift in frames” from everyday life to “frames which foster the transformative, reciprocal, and reflexive dimensions of social life.” (Stoeltje 1992:263). Conclusions emerged from sites of investigation such as the overlap of sacred and secular in church performance spaces, the reconfiguration of public and private space that occurred in outdoor street venues, and the use of visual art elements and other markers to shift perceptual frames in downtown landscapes.

This dissertation is organized so as to draw on descriptions and examples from the production process to illustrate the ways in which spatial considerations comprised a significant component of production decisions, especially as they pertained to participant spatial perceptions and expectations based in personal experience and third-party feedback from past festival events. The various chapters will also engage in theoretical analysis that focuses on how the physical and symbolic transformation of space and place

created, through juxtaposition, ambiguous sites that effected the liminality which characterizes festival. Chapters are organized in a sequence that is roughly chronological, according to three main phases of production identified by consultants—“visioning,” programming, and committee meetings—and each chapter will provide both descriptions of the production processes during that phase as well as theoretical analysis of key issues, with particular emphasis on the frameworks of “imagining space,” “contesting space,” and “transforming space.” The descriptive portions will not be comprehensive, but rather will (necessarily) excerpt moments of the process that are either necessary to keep the reader oriented to the process as a whole, or are most relevant to issues of space and place; in some cases, when a particular issue recurred throughout the year, I will discuss it vis-à-vis the phase where the issue emerged most prominently. The overall organization of the dissertation also reflects my methodological emphasis on process rather than product—unlike most treatments of festival which center the festival event in the analytical narrative, this dissertation sets the 2005 Lotus Festival event as the penultimate chapter, attending to it as just one of many phases of production.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 has thus far provided an overview of the main ideas and research design of the study, and I have positioned the study in terms of some existing scholarship on world music and the festival genre. Situating my research in the midst of these points of view and some critical gaps in previous approaches, I have described my reasons for focusing on process and then provided a rationale and orientation for my specific focus on space and the construction of spatial liminality as it pertains to festival affect. The

remainder of this chapter will outline the dissertation structure and define some terms according to their usage in the study.

Chapter 2, “What’s a Lotus?”, will provide a more detailed orientation to Bloomington, Indiana and present a history of the festival according to its three primary founders. I will then identify and explore some key issues that emerged from these historical narratives and pertain to the present focus on space and place, including the issue of the festival’s name and the event’s ambivalent relationship to Indiana University. The rest of the chapter will provide a snapshot of the festival model, with emphasis on its 2004 manifestation; the reader will also be provided with festival posters illustrating how the festival had changed and grown since its inception in 1994.

Chapter 3, “‘Visioning’ the Festival,” explores the first main phase of 2005 festival production in which producers considered the overall shape of the festival, including layout and budget. Using the 2004 “debriefing” meeting as a point of departure, the discussion will describe this phase and then focus on two main issues. First, it will explore the construction of a particular “festival geography” that was overlaid onto the spaces of downtown Bloomington, emphasizing the ways in which producers redefined such points of orientation as centers and borders. Theoretical discussion here will emphasize the relationship between space and place and draw heavily on the perspective of geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, who posits place as a particular kind of space made apprehensible by orientation to and evaluation of points of sensory, social, and conceptual significance. Second, the chapter will introduce the problem of “freebies”—people who attended the festival without buying a ticket—and lay the groundwork for an understanding of this issue that would ultimately have a significant

impact on many later spatial considerations. The chapter will then conclude with an examination of the general plan that was ultimately approved for 2005, as well as the festival's new relationship with the City of Bloomington.

Chapter 4, "Programming the Festival," will orient the reader to the second main phase of festival production, in which specific artists were chosen and specific venues were selected for use at the 2005 festival event. This chapter will draw heavily on discussions with Executive Director Lee Williams about his approach to the booking process (for which he is solely responsible), beginning by situating the Lotus Festival amidst the larger network of world music presentations and then moving into some Bloomington-specific processes of selection. A discussion of venue spaces will follow, emphasizing perceptions of various spaces and spatial affect and the criteria by which they were chosen and then transformed for festival usage. The primary theoretical exploration of Chapter 4 will center on the use of downtown churches as Lotus Festival venues, exploring issues of the juxtaposition of sacred and secular in these spaces.

Chapter 5, "Making the Festival Happen" will follow the production process as it moved out of Lee's office and into the realm of broader participation by volunteer production committees. The chapter will provide an overview of this committee structure and describe the different committees involved, and then it will proceed to focus in on three groups—the Venues Sub-committee, the Street Closings/Tents Sub-committee, and the Visual Arts Committee—whose activities related to the construction of ambiguity within the festival geography. For Venues and Street Closings, the discussion will center on the notion of "contested space" as it pertained to the creation of new "outdoor street stages" that involved the closure of two city blocks and the establishment of exclusive

access to those areas. This section will highlight issues of public and private space, as well as issues of inclusion and exclusion. Concluding the chapter will be a discussion of the Visual Arts Committee and their use of visual elements and parades to “festivalize” downtown space; theoretical analysis will highlight the role of visual elements in the dislocation of place and in the construction of meta-communicative cues for the interpretation of festival space.

Chapter 6, entitled “The Final Phase,” will treat the twelfth annual Lotus World Music and Arts Festival event that took place from September 22-25, 2005. With an emphasis on the ticketed performance showcases on Friday and Saturday evenings, I will begin by providing a descriptive overview of the various elements which comprised the 2005 event. The discussion will then turn to an analysis of attendee interviews that provided a “day-of” evaluation of the different issues that emerged during the production process—orientation to festival space, experiences of churches as venues, reactions to the new outdoor street stages, and experiences of the festival’s “street scene” and visual art elements. Exploration of attendee experiences will also be supplemented by data from producer debriefings and evaluations, gathered immediately after the 2005 event.

The body of the dissertation will end with Chapter 7, entitled “Beyond Lotus.” This short chapter will review the major theoretical issues raised by the study and summarize some of my conclusions regarding spatial liminality and the construction of ambiguity via the production of the Lotus Festival. I will then move into a more free-form exploration of the potential implications of the present study, expanding on the notion of “not-not-here” and suggesting future research that could use space and spatial

affect to engage broader ideas about world music festivals vis-à-vis issues of locality, identity and community, and the indexing of place and placelessness.

Finally, several Appendices will provide the reader access to maps that illustrate important principles of this study, as well as to various important production and festival documents that were used or referenced in the production process. These latter documents will supplement maps and photos provided in the body of the text, and will include items such as budget documents, early programming lists, artist bios, official documents given to the City of Bloomington, sample production documents, venue site maps, press releases, and excerpts from research fieldnotes.

Definition of Terms

Certain terms require clarification vis-à-vis their use within the context of this dissertation. The following list provides some definitions:

City refers to both a geographic area and its unit(s) of governance. I use the lowercase “city” when talking about Bloomington as a geographic entity or in terms of its physical spaces, and the capital “City” when talking about the City of Bloomington as a governmental or political body.

Liminality: For the purposes of this dissertation, I use Victor Turner’s notion of the “liminal” as a temporary, transitional state that is in-between existing social structures and contains or reveals possibilities for social re-orderings. In this sense, Turner makes numerous connections between liminality and the ludic mode of play, which is “in

potentiality and in principle a free and experimental region of culture.” Liminality is characterized as a state of being neither in nor out and as such is also a useful concept when thinking about the status of boundaries and border areas; it can also be conceived in terms of a threshold between states, as in the “transition” stage of van Gennep’s structure of *rite de passage*. In the present study, however, I will not be making use of the more processually-oriented features of the liminal as used by Turner in his theory of “social drama”—specifically, I will not be dealing with the aspect he calls “reintegration,” or any lasting impact on social order after the liminal state has passed (Turner 1982, Gennep 1960[1909]).

Lotus was the term used by production participants to refer, interchangeably, to the festival event, the official organization of LEAF, and to themselves as a more loosely-defined network of key individuals involved in festival production. I have adopted this multivalent reification on the basis of its usage by all of my consultants, and I have done my best to distinguish its multiple meanings via context, in the same way that my consultants did.

Production is the term used to refer to what Judi Latta called “the mediated process” (Latta 1999: 18) of bringing the festival from idea to finished product. It encompasses various stages of conceptualization, negotiation, and execution, as well as the relationship of these processes to form and discourse (see Stoeltje 1993).

Production participants is a designation which refers to the people who had some level of responsibility in the production process, whether as staff or volunteers. It is intended to distinguish these individuals as a subset of the broader category of “festival participants,” which also included artists and audience members (most production participants also self-identified as audience members, in addition to their production roles).

Space is a difficult notion to explain, and there exist numerous volumes devoted to exploration of its different conceptions and philosophical approaches. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have attempted to confine my references primarily to physical space as defined by practico-sensory activity (see Lefebvre 1991) and physically-objective or material points of reference, as opposed to mental or purely social “space.” However, to the extent that perception and conception of physical space is predicated on social or lived experience, it is impossible to fully separate physical and social aspects. My usage of the term “space” will therefore encompass both physical landscape and its social-symbolic apprehension.

What's a Lotus?

Introduction

“What’s a Lotus?”

The question was listed among responses gathered by a local newspaper, the *Herald-Times*, in reply to their call for readers to describe “the best thing about the Lotus Festival” (“Instant Message” 2004). In reality, the answer to this seemingly simple question was far from straightforward. “Lotus” corresponded to a flower, person, a festival, a symbol, and a philosophy. In the context of Bloomington, Indiana, the term brought to peoples’ minds a range of emotions and descriptions, from “celebrating diversity through music” to something “contrived”; from “an opportunity to appreciate differences” to “recognizing how we’re alike”; from “a bonding experience for our

citizenry” to “feeling left out and excluded”; from a vibe¹ that is “off-putting” to one that is “pro-social” (Personal interviews, “Instant Message” 2004, “Lotus: So Many Reasons” 2004).

In order to understand how the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival stood for so many different things to so many people, it is important to first situate the reader in a place called Bloomington, Indiana, and flesh out some of the basics of this thing called “the Lotus Festival.” Starting with some geographic and statistical information about Bloomington, the chapter will briefly orient the reader to the city and some of its residents’ senses of place. The chapter will then move into a presentation of the history of the festival, as told to me by the event’s three primary founders— James Combs, Shahyar Daneshgar, and Lee Williams—and from that history I will draw attention to two issues that emerged from the historical narratives and pertain to the present study’s focus on ambiguity and space/place. The first of these issues centers on the ways in which the choice of festival name intentionally positioned the event in both a local and non-local context; the second issue has to do with the ways in which festival producers have conceived and navigated relationships between the event and Indiana University. Finally, the concluding section of this chapter will fast-forward to the present and orient the reader to the Lotus Festival as it was manifested at the time of research, based primarily on data and observations from the 2004 festival, the event which primarily informed the 2005 production process that is the focus of this study.²

¹ The term “vibe” recurred throughout meetings and interviews. While never explicitly defined by any of my consultants, this colloquial term derives from the word “vibration” and usually pertains to a sense of overarching affect or “energy” in a given environment.

² The 2004 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival took place from September 15-19, 2004.

An Orientation to Bloomington, Indiana

Bloomington, Indiana, is located in the rolling, hilly landscape of Monroe County in the southern half of the state, about 50 miles south of the capital city of Indianapolis and about a four-hour drive from the large metropolitan areas of Chicago and St. Louis. The city is most well known as the home of the main campus of Indiana University, a Big Ten, Research I university which for nine months of every year injects approximately 38,000 students into the local population. Aside from the university, however, the permanent population of Bloomington is roughly 70,000, comprising about two-thirds of the total population of Monroe County.³ The largest fields of local employment are educational services (primarily in connection with Indiana University), followed by manufacturing, much of which is related to the medical or life sciences industry; Bloomington's unemployment rate ranks below the state average. Unlike the majority of the state of Indiana, which typically leans to the right politically, Bloomington has traditionally voted Democratic and is considered by many to be a small island of liberalism in an otherwise more conservative region. Bloomington has a low crime rate, and what crime does exist is primarily non-violent; many of the city's 13 public and 12 much smaller private primary and secondary schools have excellent reputations.

In terms of its population demographics, as of the 2000 Census Bloomington's residents self-identified as 85.7 percent White Non-Hispanic, 4.2 percent African American, 2.5 percent Hispanic, and approximately 5 percent Asian (combined Korean,

³ The last formal count put the population of Bloomington at 69,291; the population of Monroe County is estimated at around 120,000, not counting university students. These and all other figures in this section are based on the 2000 Census, at the time of writing the most recent formal collection of demographic data.

Chinese, Japanese, Indian, or “Other Asian”).⁴ The bulk of the population reported European ancestry, with the single largest group (approximately 25 percent) claiming German descent; this distribution is consistent with the rest of the region. Educationally speaking, Bloomington residents are extremely well-educated—91.2 percent of the population was reported as having at least a high school education, and 54.8 percent had a bachelor’s degree or higher, a figure that is significantly above the state average. 29.5 percent of the population has a graduate or professional degree.⁵ Although not formally polled, several years of residence and conversation in Bloomington suggest that a significant portion of the local population first came to the area as university students and then made their permanent home here following graduation.

As mentioned earlier, Indiana University (IU) is a central feature of the city of Bloomington, with its large campus located several blocks east of Bloomington’s downtown square (the square is discursively considered the center of Bloomington and is the site of the Monroe County Courthouse, taking up the block between the north-south arteries Walnut Street and College Avenue, and east-west-running Kirkwood and 6th Streets). The university’s well-landscaped grounds are home to a series of architecturally-imposing buildings made of famous Indiana limestone, as well as to the popular Hoosiers basketball team that was the subject of the 1986 movie by the same name. Other well-known features of Indiana University include its world-renowned School of Music; the Kinsey Institute; the Indiana Memorial Union, which is the world’s

⁴ 0.8 percent identified as American Indian, 1.1 percent as “Other race,” and 2 percent as “Two or more races.”

⁵ Source for all statistics is the 2000 Census, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data is cited from a 23 October 2005 access of the following websites: <http://www.city-data.com/city/Bloomington-Indiana.html>; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloomington,_Indiana; and <http://www.infoplease.com/us/census/data/indiana/bloomington/social.html>.

second-largest student union building; and the Little 500 bicycle race dramatized in the 1979 movie *Breaking Away*. Outside of the university, Bloomington sports a considerable wealth of ethnically-diverse restaurants and locally-owned retail establishments,⁶ a thriving weekly Farmer's Market, several public parks, and numerous



Figure 2.1: The IU Sample Gates, at the eastern end of Kirkwood Avenue. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

opportunities to hear a wide variety of live music; the city is also extremely close to the recreational offerings of Lake Monroe, Griffy Lake, and Lake Lemon, as well as three

⁶ Many residents emphasized the support of local businesses as an important part of living in Bloomington, and this claim seemed to carry a great deal of social capital. While several retail or restaurant chains thrive on the outskirts of town, many chains have tried and failed to establish a downtown presence.

state parks and two state forests within a thirty-minute drive radius.⁷ Bloomington is also proximate to the Brown County town of Nashville, a popular and scenic tourist destination in southern Indiana that was established as a thriving artists' colony in the early 1900s; the area is known today for its famous landscapes, local artists, and unique shopping opportunities.

Bloomingtonians with whom I spoke reported a fairly consistent sense of place and pride in their place of residence, frequently describing Bloomington as a “friendly,” “progressive” city with a “small-town feel” and “closely-bonded community” that “prides itself on being a multicultural place” (Personal interviews). Many consultants also drew my attention to a sense of Bloomington as a “music-centric” place,⁸ citing both the School of Music and a thriving local music scene. Perhaps the most popular descriptor was the term “oasis,” usually referring to a sense of the area’s political leanings and cultural offerings as contrastive to those of surrounding regions in southern Indiana. (I would like to briefly suggest here that this sense of an “oasis” marks perceptions of Bloomington as already being a rather liminal site, in geographic and social terms, even prior to the introduction of the festival and the explorations of spatial liminality that the present study will undertake.)

⁷ The state parks are Brown County State Park, McCormick’s Creek State Park, and Spring Mill State Park. The state forests are Yellowwood State Forest and Morgan-Monroe State Forest.

⁸ Although several people described Bloomington’s thriving music scene and music-friendly environment, the exact term “music-centric” was used by Jim Manion in a personal interview with the author, 9 August 2005.

Planting a Lotus: Origins of the Festival

The first Lotus Festival took place in Bloomington in October 1994, the fruits of collective grassroots efforts and the leadership of three individuals who brought the event from idea to reality in only three months. James Combs, Shahyar Daneshgar, and Lee Williams had all found their way to Bloomington through attendance at Indiana University—students who decided to stay. All three had ties to the local music scene in some capacity. Shahyar, who was working on an advanced degree at IU, maintained the closest ties to the university and also headed a group called Saba: Breeze of the East that played music of the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.⁹ James had formed and played in a popular rock band called Arson Garden that, in his words, had a “good run” in the local Bloomington music scene. Lee had amassed considerable experience and connections as a booking agent, programming music for local clubs such as Second Story and Jake’s (now called Axis), as well as working on a short-lived summer festival called HoosierFest.¹⁰ These three men also had strong ties to a new community radio station called WFHB, which would quickly become a major supporter of the new event.

While separate interviews with James, Shahyar, and Lee revealed slightly different perspectives on the birth of the festival, the basic storyline is easy to discern. James was getting ready to leave Bloomington for Chicago and so had freed up the summer of 1994 to make his plans. One day around that time, he went to the Indiana University Art Museum to see a performance by Shahyar and his group Saba; about a week later, he ran into Shahyar again at a local coffeehouse called The Runcible Spoon,

⁹ Shahyar Daneshgar is of Azeri heritage.

¹⁰ Lee had also managed Arson Garden for a while, and so was acquainted with James Combs through the band.

where James worked at the time. James and Shahyar got to talking and expressing mutual admiration for each others' music, and they discussed the possibility of playing a show together sometime. They kept talking about that idea, and soon it began to grow into something larger, as both musicians marveled at the range of music available in Bloomington but lamented that most of this music happened via small concerts for small audiences, largely outside of the public eye. Why not put something together on a bigger scale? Inspired by a WOMAD/Peter Gabriel event in Indianapolis the year before, James and Shahyar began to envision a festival in Bloomington that would combine rock and "international music," reflecting their respective areas of expertise.

With a lot of time on his hands that summer, James became more excited about the idea and contacted Lee about the possibility of putting on some kind of festival. Lee was initially reluctant to be drawn in because of the time commitment that would be involved, but James reported that Lee became "obsessed with the idea" over the course of the days following their conversation; his participation made the idea seem truly feasible, given all of his connections and booking experience. Lee was also the one who suggested focusing the event solely on international music (at the time, popular consumption of "world music" was still a relatively new phenomenon),¹¹ based on Shahyar's knowledge of a range of musical styles and also on his own experience programming for the Bloomington market and his feeling about what would be popular. Although Bloomington is not a site of tremendous ethnic diversity, James recalled that

¹¹ Billboard first created a "world music" chart in 1990. The term had been in use among ethnomusicologists and scholars for several decades, but not in reference to a specific marketing category. Most scholars and music industry professionals consider the late 1980s as the time when the term "world music" began to gain currency as a widely-used, mainstream generic label in the music industry. See Taylor 1997.

they considered things such as the tastes of a local population perceived as “hippy artist,” a strong presence for folk and international music on WFHB, and the presence of the renowned Ethnomusicology Institute at IU as well as the university’s significant population of international students. There was also (and remains) a strong local interest in New Orleans and New Orleans’ music culture (Zydeco, Cajun), and James had been impressed with the successful, multi-cultural Festival International de Louisiane in Lafayette, Louisiana during his travels with Arson Garden. The decision was made to follow Lee’s suggestion and focus on international music; however, the founders also made a conscious decision to include American music, since it was “our contribution to international music” (James Combs, personal interview) as well as being already supported and popular among Bloomington residents.

After the vision was clear, the group had only a few months to bring it to fruition. They cultivated support from WFHB and from the Mayor, and Shahyar spearheaded a fundraising effort that delved into various university departments as well as local corporate entities such as Monroe Bank and the *Herald-Times* (the major local newspaper). Lee remembers that the newly-opened John Waldron Arts Center (in a downtown building converted from the old City Hall) as an important new site that helped to make the first festival possible in the downtown area. He noted that the Waldron was the “first quiet space for sit-down music in town...for acoustic music, something that wasn’t a club”; not only was this concept and its two performance spaces “revolutionary,” it also helped open up the proposed music event to include a younger audience or families with kids who had been excluded from the bar/club scene. The Waldron also housed both WFHB and the Bloomington Area Arts Council (BAAC) and

so was a logical center for what Lee called a “synergy” that was extremely conducive to the festival idea (Lee Williams, personal interviews).

The pieces came together very quickly and garnered extraordinary community support. James Combs recalled that

I’ve never seen an idea catch on like this one. Everyone who heard about it wanted to be involved. Institutions gave us money, the [mayor’s] administration gave us support, the Waldron gave us space, WFHB vigorously waved our flag, and the community came out in droves to volunteer. All of which happened pretty quickly—it was only about fourteen weeks from the time we started discussing it to the actual gig. (Holladay 2005:8)

LuAnne Holladay, in the new book about the festival, also describes this whirlwind:

The budget was meager, barely more than \$10,000. There was no marketing machine, and there was very little time, because plans for the festival had gotten underway only in July. The organizers were musicians, schoolteachers, artists, graduate students, a booking agent, and volunteers at a new community radio station. Two dozen sponsors came through with a little money and a lot of help with programs, T-shirts, banners, and food. It was easy enough to cover most of the other essentials with the friends of friends who popped up to volunteer as ticket-takers, stage-managing emcees, and all-purpose problem solvers. And so the local and international Lotus World Music and Arts Festival came to life one balmy October night in 1994. (Holladay 2005:7)

By all accounts, that first festival was, in James’s words, “an ecstatically successful event” (James Combs, personal interview). The sold-out festival used three stages for one night—the two performance spaces in the Waldron (an auditorium and a small room that used to be a fire engine bay), and a club across the street called Second Story—and featured 14 artists playing musical styles from 10 countries. With 700 people buying tickets that cost \$10, the Lotus Festival was born in Bloomington and continued to grow. James left town after the first year, while Shahyar continued to be very involved; Lee quickly became the primary organizer of the event and continued to run it as Executive

Director. At the time of this study, the festival producers were preparing for their twelfth year.

What's In a Name?

The story of the festival's origins contains certain elements that are worth drawing attention to in light of the present study's focus on issues of ambiguity in space and place. The first of these has to do with the festival's name—"Lotus." All three of the original festival planners recalled the debates that went into the decision about what to call this new event, and they all cited a concerted effort to find a name that would brand a particularly local identity. Lee remembered the quick rejection of names like the obvious "Bloomington World Music Festival" because there are several other towns in the U.S. with the same name; Shahyar laughed about one suggestion to name the festival after a tree found all over the area, remembering their concern that the "Sycamore Festival" might be abbreviated in casual conversation to the "Sick Festival" (Shahyar Daneshgar, personal interview). But they were not only concerned with finding a name to reflect Bloomington—they wanted to also find a way to invoke the musical range of the festival's offerings. Lee noted that "we were also looking for more than just a place name . . . something with a connection to the area, but also something to represent the international scope, something beyond Bloomington" (Lee Williams, personal interview).

The answer emerged when one member of the group brought up a local musician during a planning meeting in the Waldron—Lotus Dickey.¹² An important figure in folk

¹² There is some debate here. Shahyar and James remember the idea of the lotus flower being proposed first and then the idea expanding to include Dickey; Lee remembers the suggestion of Dickey first, followed by the other associations.

and old-time music in southern Indiana, Quinten Lotus Dickey was a fiddler, guitarist, composer, singer, and song collector who had even been named an Indiana State Treasure. Even though Dickey had passed away seven years prior to the first festival, he was well known and well loved in Bloomington, fondly remembered for his “joyful spirit” and his “playfulness and energy,” and the mention of his name sparked some ideas for the original planners. While they felt that they couldn’t name the festival after him alone because it wasn’t an old-time festival,¹³ there were also the synonymous associations of “lotus” as a flower that is found all over the world and is a symbol of Buddhism and various Eastern cultures. “‘Lotus’ made all of the right connections,” recalled Lee. “The festival honors Lotus Dickey as just one aspect of the event” (Lee Williams, personal interview). On a more abstract level, Nan McEntire, a scholar who worked closely with Dickey to document his life, noted that Lotus Dickey’s personality was also representative of the spirit the new event was trying to promote: “Lotus was this older gentleman that so many younger people in Bloomington fell in love with . . . he embodied this sort of openness, creativity, and charm.” She opined that Lee might have also

. . . wanted the festival to be similarly unpretentious, to carry that sense of humbleness and charm, like this man who never had more than a high school education but was a musical genius . . . if Lotus could inspire so many people to gather around him and enjoy music, maybe [the] festival could inspire people to have music in their heart. (Nan McEntire, personal interview)

¹³ There is actually another festival called the “Lotus Dickey Festival.”

Those many levels of meaning were part of Lotus Dickey's own story, as well.¹⁴

Born in 1911, Quinten Lotus Dickey was the fifth child of Marion Dickey and his second wife, Sarah Jane "Jennie" Reck. Although born in Muncie, Indiana, Lotus soon moved with his parents to a log home in southern Indiana, after his father became frustrated with the onslaught of industrialization at the turn of the twentieth century. Dillon Bustin, another scholar who worked extensively with Lotus Dickey, writes of Marion:

Marion Dickey was a thoughtful man who read extensively and attended lectures on a broad variety of subjects. By 1910 he was convinced that he had made a mistake for himself and his family in pursuing the steelworker's trade; in fact he believed that industrial capitalism was a mistake for the society as a whole. He was disillusioned with the political process and pessimistic regarding the union's prospects. At the age of 50 he was ready to start over once again. (Bustin in McEntire 1995:7)

Part of one of the early waves of the back-to-the-land movement, Marion Dickey and several other Muncie families sought land where they could farm and live more simply. During their search that eventually turned up an inexpensive forty acres in Orange County, Indiana, Lotus was born and became, in many ways, a symbol of the family's new path. Bustin writes that:

It so happened that while this search was going on, Marion was reading through the Hindu Vedas and other ancient texts translated from Sanskrit. He was particularly taken with the *Bhagavad-Gita* and its mention of the lotus blossom as a symbol of purity and transcendence...When the baby was born in December he named him Quinten Lotus—Quinten because he was the fifth, and Lotus to hold their hopes for an unsullied life disengaged from the pollution and corruption of the industrial age. (Bustin in McEntire 1995:7)

¹⁴ All information given here about Lotus Dickey's life is drawn either from *The Lotus Dickey Songbook* or a personal interview with Nan McEntire. See McEntire 1995.

While the intimate details of Lotus Dickey's life are available in other sources for the curious to peruse at leisure,¹⁵ the short version is that the symbolically-named Lotus grew up working the land with his family while spending evenings listening to readings that came equally from the Bible and from classic literature and poetry; the family also spent many hours singing and making music, with Lotus and his brother Cyprian particularly interested in the fiddle and the guitar. Lotus himself cited the beginning of his prolific songwriting career as 1934, and his songs' richly poetic lyrics echo the various periods of his life that took him away from home to be married in 1943; to a series of factory jobs to augment his farming income in the 1950s and 1960s; to the death of his father and mother in 1952 and 1961, respectively; to his 1963 return to the land where he grew up, following the collapse of his marriage. Lotus would remain in that log home for the rest of his life, until his death from leukemia in 1989, and those years were spent composing the extensive body of songs that would become his legacy.

With little publishing success prior to his retirement from a life of labor in the early 1980s, in 1981 he met Nan McEntire, Dillon Bustin, and a small group of other folklorists from Indiana University who would quickly bring this prolific and talented musician to the attention of what Bustin calls "the folk revival circuit." In the last eight years of his life, Lotus Dickey would record several albums; play at festivals including the National Folk Festival, the University of Chicago Folk Festival, and numerous other engagements; serve as an artist-in-residence at IU; and perform at schools, state parks, and camps. Nan described Lotus also spending quite a bit of time in Bloomington, both on his own and with his folklorist friends, and she remembers him being thrilled with his

¹⁵ McEntire 1995 provides a good bibliography and filmography for sources of information about Lotus Dickey's life and music.

exposure to the many different kinds of music going on in town. Much of it was new to this artist who had been exposed to blues, gospel, and old-time but had otherwise lived in what Nan called “a pretty homogeneous world” where he had no experience with the sounds he was hearing in Bloomington—jazz, African drumming, Segovia, or Indian pan pipes. Many of these new influences made their way into Lotus’s music in the later years of his life (Nan McEntire, personal interview).¹⁶

From this abbreviated biography, it should be clear that the festival’s partial namesake himself embodied many of the layers of significance that the new event was seeking to project through its choice of moniker. In a swirl of complexity, the web of associations seems to look something like this: Lotus-the-man bore a name which intentionally hearkened back to distant lands and rich symbolism and yet demonstrated a remarkable devotion to the soil of his native Indiana and a deep connection to local place that he described vividly in his music which was influenced by a creative and innovative spirit that drew its inspiration, in part, from the decidedly non-local sounds that he was hearing in a little town called Bloomington; several years after his death, Lotus-the-festival would be conceived by founders who chose to use this man’s name to celebrate and brand a specifically regional/local identity onto an event comprised of the widest-possible range of international music styles, while simultaneously seeking to partialize the reference to the man by emphasizing the meaning of Lotus-the-flower in a full-circle return, ironically, to the man himself and the depth of meaning his father saw in his

¹⁶ Nan recalls that Lotus actually didn’t like jazz that much, feeling that “they started out with a melody but then kind of let it go.”

choice of his son's name.¹⁷ Simultaneously local and vast in its indexicality, the name "Lotus" thus highlights ambiguities of place that are a fitting introduction to this dissertation's focus on spatial liminality.

Town and Gown: The Festival and the University

In addition to the name chosen for the festival, another important and relevant issue that emerged from its history is the way in which founder decisions and subsequent developments negotiated a particular relationship between Bloomington and its primary tenant, Indiana University. The relationship was characterized by a profound ambivalence, particularly on the part of the Lotus organization; encompassed financial, spatial-geographic, and intellectual dimensions; and somewhat complicated the festival's self-identification as a "Bloomington" event. Further, this ambivalence was clearly illustrated by the range of opinions I encountered regarding the festival's relationship to the university, starting with the different perspectives that the event's three founders brought to their respective memories of the early stages of development.

Significantly, all three original planners drew a divide between a rather reified sense of "the university" and what they all called "the community," somewhat problematically but implicitly defined as the population of Bloomington not associated with IU. James Combs's recollections were the least specific, attributing Shahyar Daneshgar's participation as a significant link to the university (since Shahyar was

¹⁷ It is also significant to note that this history of the festival's name was no longer widely recognized. Although the festival featured a yearly Lotus Dickey Tribute where his friends remembered him by performing his songs, and festival program notes made reference to the artist and his significance to the local area, Lee and Nan both opined that the double meaning of the festival's name had likely been lost to most participants as the festival had grown.

actively pursuing an advanced degree at the time) but commenting that in that first year “IU thought it was a great idea, but wasn’t really involved . . . it was mostly out in the community.” On the other hand, Shahyar felt that the university was highly involved, perhaps as a result of his lead role in the fundraising effort which tapped into funds on both institutional departmental levels. He also noted the participation of many university-affiliated individuals, a comment which highlights some of the problems in discursively splitting Bloomington into town and gown—many long-time and civically-involved residents work for the university, even though they may have a broader participation in local life.

Lee’s recollections reiterated this complication and shed light on the way the festival’s conception mobilized a sense of two distinct yet ambiguously defined populations and space:

There’s a history of relationship to IU. In 1994, when the festival started, it was started by three people who went to IU. I was drawn here by the university, and I loved it and still do . . . it’s an important part of our daily lives. [James, Shahyar, and I] all lived off-campus, as members of the non-IU community . . . the art-world community . . . and we felt that there was not a lot in the community that got recognized for musical quality. The live music clubs were some of the most active musical venues in town, but there were sort of an underground musical scene . . . we knew that there were a lot of talented people who might be appreciated if they were presented in the right context. We didn’t define ourselves as “anti-IU,” but we wanted to be proud of achieving something done with musical integrity and respect for the artist in the community, away from the university . . . something physically separate. So we chose not to put it in any space on campus. We knew that IU was going to have to play a part, but we still wanted to base the festival downtown. (Lee Williams, personal interview)

In later comments, Lee articulated this slightly differently, noting that

The original organizing committee wanted to prove that a community-based organization could produce a large-scale musical event of quality, without financial help from Indiana University. Where we got this strange

notion, I don't remember! But the first festival was a success, and within two years IU was our largest donor . . . and they continue to be. (Lee Williams, remarks from a press conference, 6 July 2005)

However, Lee himself later noted the discrepancies in this account. Even in its first year, the festival used some university-based funds; although the evening events did not use campus venues, daytime events during the first festival were held at the Mathers Museum of World Cultures, an institution physically located slightly off-campus but administratively affiliated with IU. In subsequent years, the festival had periodically used campus venues such as Alumni Hall (in the Indiana Memorial Union) and the IU Auditorium, and administrative festival tents had been erected on Kirkwood Avenue, the corridor that visually and kinesthetically links campus and the downtown area. As of 2005, IU remained the single-largest sponsor of the event (providing 20-25 percent of the annual sponsorship funds); graduate students in the IU Ethnomusicology Students' Association took responsibility for producing festival-affiliated workshops; and the IU Union Board¹⁸ continued to sponsor a stage and collaborate on some programming choices. Still, the Lotus Festival had always identified itself as a "community" event, in the sense of a "non-university community," and that identification bore a close relationship to the use of downtown venues and downtown spaces. Shahyar stressed that a major producer goal was "always to have the festival in the heart of downtown," and James emphasized the downtown spaces in his comment that "the venues were the best part" of the original festival and that "the venues really contributed to what was great about the early festivals." Lee described feedback from the first festival in which people

¹⁸ The Union Board is the student programming body of the Indiana Memorial Union, the student union of Indiana University's Bloomington campus.

reported “being blown away by the experience of the music and the sense of community that came from using community venues—non-IU venues—and seeing friends on the street” (Shahyar Daneshgar, James Combs, and Lee Williams, personal interviews). In an opinion refuted by some other production participants, Lee even once opined that people in the “community” found campus spaces confusing and off-putting.¹⁹



Figure 2.2: Looking east down Kirkwood during the setup for the 2004 festival. The Sample Gates are barely visible at the far end. (Photo by LuAnne Holladay)

¹⁹ One consultant called this a “Lee-ism” and noted that people seem to navigate the campus just fine when they attend basketball games, etc.

Despite this emphasis on spatial distinctions as the primary means for mobilizing a “community” identity in conceptualizations of the festival, these physical and social spaces become highly ambiguous when considered against the realization of the festival and the ways in which university and non-university entities have actually participated in the festival experience. In addition to the financial and spatial relationships already described, perceptions of the festival audience also highlighted the complexities involved. Lee frequently stressed to me that he didn’t “cater to IU students” in his programming choices and that students were not considered the festival “market,” in spite of the fact that students were easily the largest demographic in town; the ticket prices, relatively high by student standards, reflected this choice. He felt that “the festival is for the community,” and that if students did come, he perceived them as “the kind of students who are more sensitive to being in town” (Lee Williams, personal interview).²⁰ These and other comments illustrated an identification of “the university” largely with its student population, rather than with faculty and staff who comprised a significant portion of the festival audience but defied easy classification vis-à-vis campus/community affiliations.

Interestingly, however, in a series of casual conversations several consultants admitted knowing Bloomington residents who didn’t attend the festival precisely because they perceived it as a “university event,” on several different bases, especially that the event founders weren’t “really” Bloomingtonians because they initially came to town as students, and that they perceived the audience to be largely comprised of university students and faculty. Shawn Reynolds, a member of the LEAF Board of Directors and a

²⁰ One consultant, interviewed during pre-dissertation research, even expressed an explicit distaste for the student audience, citing concern about alcohol consumption and the behavior of a “younger” festival crowd. This same consultant also thought that the Lotus offerings don’t actually appeal to the university population, saying that the “IU crowd is more interested in other types of arts.”

long-time participant, echoed the latter sentiment and suggested that the esotericism of the notion of “world music” might also have contributed to perceptions of the festival as a “university event”:

Even though the festival was conceived as a community event, the reality is that it wouldn't happen if IU wasn't here . . . IU creates the audience. The festival only happens because this is a university town, and it would not be the same event in someplace like Columbus [Indiana], even though they see themselves as a progressive town. Most people haven't heard of these artists . . . I can see how someone living in, say, Ellettsville, who's not connected to the university, looking at this esoteric line-up of people they've never heard of and this festival with a wacky name, might wonder why they should go. (Shawn Reynolds, personal interview)

In 2003, the festival began offering reduced-price student tickets as part of a sponsorship agreement with the university, making student attendance partially trackable for the first time.²¹ Records from sales of these tickets suggest that, in recent years, students made up nearly one-fifth of the total population of festival attendees.

Lotus Festival Overview: 1994 to the Present

Between 1994 and 2005, the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival grew significantly. It expanded from one night to four nights (usually Thursday through Sunday), frequently providing extra and often free workshops or other activities occurring earlier in the festival week. The number of stages increased, as did the list of participating artists and the list of countries from which they hailed. In 1995, the festival spawned a not-for-profit organization—the Lotus Education and Arts Foundation, or LEAF—which assumed responsibility for production of the event, took on a Board of

²¹ Not completely trackable, however, since the significant numbers of students who participate as volunteers were not counted this way.

Directors, built a more formal structure for sponsorship and fundraising, and helped create more events throughout the year to support an organizational mission of “creating opportunities to experience, celebrate, and explore the diversity of the world’s cultures, through music and the arts.” In a new book about the festival, author and LEAF staff member LuAnne Holladay summarizes these non-festival but related developments over the years:

The festival spun off concerts during the year, to bring back the favorites—or to make a date for a group whose tour schedule didn’t mesh with the Lotus Festival dates. There was a “world bazaar” for children that ultimately became a week of outreach to elementary schools. “Arts” for Lotus grew to include gallery exhibits (photographs from Guatemala and Mexico, Aboriginal dot-painting from Australia, handmade instruments, Day of the Dead altars); banners and stage backdrops; sculpture. Films and workshops followed, and free concerts. (Holladay 2005:16)

LuAnne also describes some of the other ways in which the festival had evolved, grown, and garnered greater community and grassroots support:

More people came each year: they told their friends, brought families. Local media picked up the story, and writers from the *Herald-Times* and the *Ryder* interviewed musicians on the road. The university’s NPR station, WFIU, joined WFHB in bringing performers off the road and into the studio. The city helped close some of Bloomington’s downtown blocks for the weekend, to make way for tent stages and festival-goers who strolled or dashed from site to site, danced in street parades, or stopped to talk with friends. For some people, it has become a reunion, and they return year after year from disparate places to see family and friends. (Holladay 2005:16)

In 2004 and in the period covered by this study, LEAF was comprised of a Board of Directors,²² two full-time paid staff members, one part-time paid staff member; they also depended on the participation of several seasonal work-study employees and many

²² In 2005, the LEAF Board of Directors had 17 members, although the by-laws allowed for 21. A governance committee administered the process of selection and then the sitting board voted on approval for new members. Board member terms were three years.

devoted volunteers, especially at festival time (see next section). The full-time staff members were Lee Williams, discussed earlier as one of the festival's founders, who



Figure 2.3: Lee Williams. (Photo by LuAnne Holladay)

served as Executive and Artistic Director and took a lead role in almost all activities related to festival production; and LuAnne Holladay, who served as Administrative Director. Deborah Klein worked part-time and serves as Development Coordinator, bearing responsibility for oversight and management of the bulk of LEAF's fundraising activities, including grant writing and the cultivation of corporate and individual sponsors and donors. Although, as noted earlier, LEAF produced concerts and educational outreach activities throughout the year, the festival was LEAF's flagship production and

annually required the greatest support in terms of finances and staff/volunteer time and effort. In the last few years, the festival budget averaged \$150,000 to \$200,000; the bulk of funds to support this budget came from ticket sales, with the rest coming from donors/sponsorship and significantly less from merchandise sales.

The Festival Model: A Snapshot

In the years leading up to 2005, the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival occurred annually over a long weekend in late September or early October, operating according to a model that was multi-day and multi-venue, with numerous performances occurring simultaneously throughout each evening. The festival typically began with a scaled-down number of musical offerings on Thursday evening, accessed via a separate ticket; free workshops or films were frequently available in the days prior to the festival or earlier in the day on the weekend. Friday and Saturday evenings featured extensive music showcases, and the festival concluded with a free “World Spirit Concert” on Sunday.²³ Despite the many free activities, however, participants tended to define the festival primarily by the series of ticketed performances that occurred on Friday and Saturday evenings, from roughly 7:00 pm until midnight each night. In the configuration at the time of this study, attendees could purchase a paper ticket at one of several locations around town (in advance) or at a sales tent (on the day of the event), and upon arriving at the festival site they exchanged this paper ticket for a wristband to be worn for the duration of the evening. This wristband, similar to a plastic hospital band, was color-coded for a particular evening, and wristband checkers were stationed to man the doors of

²³ This annual concert was envisioned by producers as a more “spiritual,” contemplative series of performances, as a way to wind down after the intensity of Friday and Saturday nights.

each performance venue and ensure that only people with wristbands were allowed to enter. Attendees could buy a ticket for one or both nights, and in 2004 a single-night adult ticket cost \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door, while a two-night adult ticket cost \$50 in advance or \$60 at the festival.²⁴

Although there were venue changes from year to year, all venues had been located in the heart of downtown Bloomington and were generally within easy walking distance of each other. Prior to 1999, all venues were indoors, but that year saw the addition of outdoor tents. With the tents also came an agreement between LEAF and the City of Bloomington to close certain downtown streets to vehicle traffic, in order to ensure participant safety. The combination of tents and pedestrian-only blocks evolved into a “street scene” that continued to be an important part of the festival landscape, attracting both ticketed attendees as well as those who chose not to buy a ticket but still enjoyed the lively festival street atmosphere.

By the time of this study, the number of festival performance venues had increased considerably from the three spaces, housed in two buildings, which comprised the first festival. Always a combination of large and small venues and, after 1999, a combination of indoor and outdoor spaces, the number of venues varied over the years.

In 2004, the nine performance venues requiring a ticket for entry were:

- The Bluebird: a 21-and-older nightclub and bar, located near the southeast corner of 7th Street and North Walnut Street. Capacity \pm 400.
- Buskirk-Chumley Theater: located on the south side of Kirkwood Avenue, between Walnut and Washington Streets. “The Buskirk,” as it is usually referred

²⁴ In 2004, a student ticket cost \$20 in advance and \$25 at the festival; senior/child tickets had an identical price structure.

to, is a historic 1920s theater, recently restored, and is considered by producers to be the “premiere” venue. Capacity \pm 600.

- Monroe County Convention Center: a large multi-use space, without fixed seating or staging, that is arranged according to festival needs. Attached to the Marriott Courtyard hotel, on the west side of College Avenue between 3rd and 2nd Streets. Capacity \pm 1,000.
- First Christian Church: located on the north side of Kirkwood Avenue just east of Washington Street. Capacity \pm 300.
- First United Methodist Church: located on the northeast corner of Washington Street and 4th Street. Capacity \pm 600.
- Second Story: located on the south side of 4th Street between Walnut Street and College Avenue; another 21-and-older bar and nightclub. Capacity \pm 300.
- John Waldron Arts Center Auditorium: a small performance space with risers for seating, housed in the old, converted City Hall building that now serves as the home and gallery space for the Bloomington Area Arts Council; located on the northwest corner of 4th Street and Walnut Street. Capacity \pm 250.
- Monroe Bank Tent: a sponsored outdoor tent constructed in the Monroe Bank parking lot on the south side of Kirkwood Avenue just east of Lincoln Street. Capacity \pm 300.
- Union Board Tent: another sponsored outdoor tent, constructed in the middle of the closed-to-traffic block of 6th Street between Walnut Street and Washington Street. Capacity \pm 300.

The 2004 festival also featured a free “break” stage, sponsored by the *Herald-Times* newspaper, which was constructed in the middle of Kirkwood Avenue, near the intersection of Kirkwood and Grant Street. This open-air shell stage operated during the 30-minute breaks between set blocks and was free to the public.

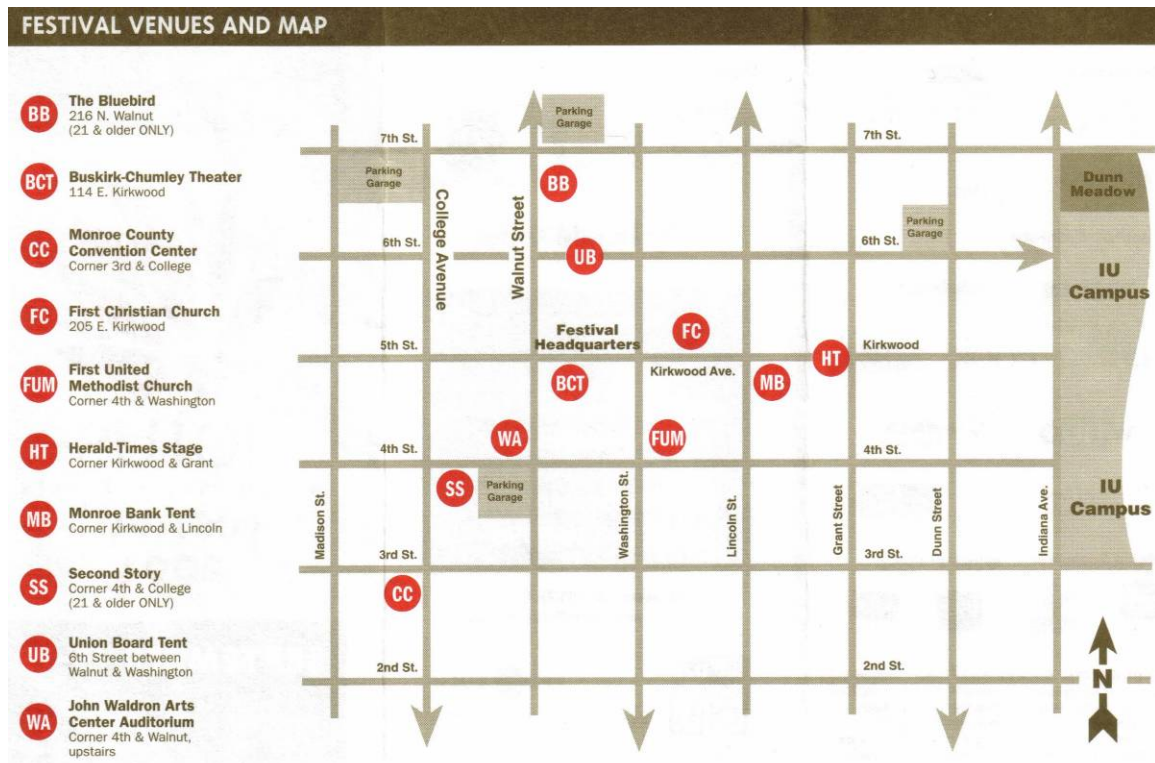


Figure 2.4: Venue map, 2004 Lotus Festival.

As noted earlier, performances in these venues happened simultaneously. Since a festival wristband allowed entry to all venues over the course of a given evening, attendees could (and were encouraged to) move among these venues as often as they pleased. Schedule grids and artist descriptions were usually provided in the local newspaper during the week prior to the festival, and many people reported that they carefully planned their festival “strategy” in order to hear as many different artists as possible. Observations at the 2004 event revealed several popular approaches, including moving among multiple venues to “sample” performances for ten or twenty minutes each; choosing one venue and remaining there for the whole evening, appreciating the different artists who came through that space; or, less frequently, following a favorite artist through their different sets in different venues. Since the first approach—sampling

many different artists at multiple venues—was considered the most popular way to “get the most out of” the event, it was not uncommon to see many audience members leaving or entering a venue mid-performance. Over the years, awareness of this practice led producers to request that people wait until breaks between songs to enter or leave a performance space, rather than interrupting music in progress.²⁵

It is also significant to note the role of volunteers in the Lotus Festival model. The corps of friends that came together to create the first event eventually grew into the hundreds, and as of 2005 the festival continued to be run on almost exclusively volunteer labor. Lee estimated that volunteers save the festival \$10,000-\$12,000,²⁶ and in recent years the event typically used between 300 and 400 volunteers to fill roughly 400-500 shifts. Some volunteers contributed skill-specific labor in construction and technical capacities, while others filled a myriad of jobs for which training was less involved (see footnote for partial list of volunteer positions).²⁷ The average volunteer made a commitment to attend training plus a shift of at least six hours, and many volunteers did much more. All volunteers were eligible for a complimentary one-night ticket in

²⁵ This practice was explained in advance to artists, in an effort to reduce the likelihood that they would be offended by people walking out in the middle of their performance.

²⁶ Estimate of wage equivalency if the required labor had to be hired.

²⁷ In 2004, major categories of volunteer responsibility included (but are not limited to): Ticket sales managers, Ticket sales assistants, Wristband exchange managers, Wristband exchange assistants, Door monitors (at each venue), Visual arts set-up / tear-down (includes decorative banners; installations; lighting; gallery exhibits), Festival store manager(s), Festival store assistants, Site set-up / tear-down, Equipment & PA load-in / load-out, Festival signage (includes large backdrop banners and informational/directional signs), Shuttle captains/managers (between motel and venues), Shuttle drivers, Artist hospitality assistants (includes maintenance of sites/green rooms; distribution of coolers w/drinks; towel pick-up; collection of meal tickets at artists' dinner site), Photographers, Videographers, Photo diarists (for volunteer behind-the-scenes archival records), Emcees, Stage managers, House managers, Recycling, Kick-off reception (includes servers, greeters, set-up and tear-down), Office assistants, Alcohol ID checkers (for Bloomingfoods tents), and Airport shuttle drivers.

exchange for working a shift or putting in a certain number of hours of pre-festival committee work; some key volunteer positions carried a small stipend and staff-like responsibilities in the months prior to the event (see Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of the participation of volunteer committees and coordinators). There was a large base of returning volunteers who helped with the festival year after year, but LEAF still constantly recruited more people as the festival grew, and they also recruited for volunteers to help with non-festival events throughout the year. One volunteer coordinator estimated that most of the “core” volunteers were over 30 and that there might be a slightly higher percentage of women (however, such demographics were not systematically collected).

In 2004, a total of 5,479 tickets were sold, with estimated audiences of 759 on Thursday, 2,505 on Friday and 3,112 on Saturday.²⁸ While detailed demographics have not typically been obtained, different types of tickets provided some evidence as to who attended, and how: in 2004, a total of 942 people bought two-night tickets, while 3,050 bought single-night tickets for Friday or Saturday; of those single-night tickets, 316 were seniors or children and 811 were students.²⁹ Beyond these numbers, though, producer understandings of the festival audience were based on informal, on-the-ground observations over the years. Interviews with festival producers revealed an operative perception of a “typical” festival audience comprised mostly of adults 30-50 years old who are employed and fairly well-educated, with a smaller but growing population of

²⁸ The audience was typically larger than the number of tickets sold, since volunteers and many sponsors or other VIPs attended via complimentary tickets.

²⁹ Special-price tickets were only available in single-night tickets, so someone in one of these categories wishing to attend both nights would have had to buy two tickets. Children under the age of 4 were admitted free.

university students; as noted earlier, however, producers intentionally had not catered to this student audience and, in spite of Bloomington's reputation as a college town, on an organizational level the event had never been identified as a collegiate festival. In broader production discourse which seemed to take into account the audience as a whole rather than narrow typifications, though, Lee and other production participants also had a sense of a total audience that was relatively diverse in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity. In terms of the latter, it is significant to note that while the majority of festival attendees were white, Lee saw this as a reflection of the general Bloomington population and felt that the festival "draws the most people of color of any event in town" as well as attracting many of the university's international students (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Programmatically, the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival remained true to its name, continuing to present exclusively "world music" in forms that ranged from "traditional" acoustic to amplified contemporary and fusion styles, from sit-down concerts to performances where everyone was dancing in the aisles.³⁰ A yearly component of the festival was the Lotus Dickey Tribute, where Dickey's friends gathered to perform his compositions for the festival audience, in honor of the festival's namesake; the Tribute was typically one of the event's opening sets. Aside from this annual performance, though, producers expected very little artist name-recognition, although Lee had sometimes invited back an artist who was particularly popular at a previous festival. For financial reasons, producers had rarely booked well-known (and thus expensive)

³⁰ As noted earlier, the Lotus definition of "world music" also included vernacular American traditions. Over the years, the festival had featured artists from more than 50 countries, as well as performances of blues, Cajun, zydeco, gospel, bluegrass, and old-time music.

“headliners” to anchor the event. Instead, I frequently heard production participants use the phrase “voyage of discovery” to describe the intended attendee experience of the festival, illustrating emphases on both newness as well as movement among the event’s offerings. Finally, despite a discursive emphasis on “discovery,” the festival was not conceived by producers to be explicitly educational. While education was implicit in the LEAF mission and had come to the fore at certain festival events such as workshops or at non-festival events such as Lotus Blossoms, a week of school outreach in the early spring, “education” at the festival-proper had been conceived as “exposure” rather than the deliberate conveyance of specific information. Venue emcees would occasionally include contextual or cultural information about performers during stage announcements, but this was up to the discretion and individual knowledge of the emcee rather than organizational policy. More information about educational considerations in programming decisions is provided in Chapter 4.

Visioning the Festival: Evaluation and Imagination

Introduction

The 2005 Lotus Festival, like most of its previous incarnations, began to take shape almost a full year before its final enactment. The start of the production process actually occupied a hazy overlap with the end of the prior year's festival—in this case, the 2004 event—in an evaluatory environment called variously the “debriefing” or “wrap-up” meeting. Both terms positioned the meeting as the final stage in the production cycle; however, the discussions that took place at this meeting also served to identify issues that would become central to the planning for the next year's event—participants discussed problems (and successes) that arose, suggested and prioritized possible changes, and posed fledgling solutions or strategies for improvement that subsequently became the basis for the new year. When I initially spoke to LEAF staff and key volunteers about the best way to approach a study of the production process, they all advised me that it was impossible to understand the 2005 process without attending

the debriefing from 2004, thus emphasizing production as cyclical, collaborative, and self-referential, rather than linear and directed towards externally-defined goals.

Whether debriefing was a beginning or an end may also have depended on the perspective of participants and their various schedules of involvement during the festival planning year. For the majority of the key volunteer personnel and committee chairpersons who participated in the meeting, the debriefing at the end of September was temporally most proximate to the end of their period of intense involvement; they subsequently took a break from Lotus until committee activity began again in roughly April or May of the following year¹ (a phase that will be treated in Chapter 5 of this dissertation). For key staff and Lee Williams in particular, however, even though the level of activity and intensity took a dramatic drop in the immediate wake of the festival event, the months of late fall and early winter were hardly a period of dormancy. From Lee's perspective, the debriefing meeting and the issues raised there formed the fundamental jumping-off point for the process of "visioning"—the creative shaping of the overall model and key features of the next year's event, taking into consideration what should remain the same, what should be changed and to what extent, and how proposed changes translated into practical strategies and budget considerations. Unlike the collaborative meeting, Lee's visioning work was a more solitary process, during which he sought feedback but also spent a great deal of time working outside of the collaborative structures that characterized festival execution in the later stages. The visioning process began with the debriefing and ended with the presentation of a new plan to the LEAF Board of Directors, the body of individuals who provide organizational

¹ Some committees, such as Visual Arts, actually met year-round, with activities increasing significantly near festival time.

fiscal oversight and who must approve the budget in order for the next festival to move forward.

2004 Post-Festival Debriefing: Setting the Stage for 2005

The 2004 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival took place from September 16-19, 2004. In the wake of this event and hopefully caught up on their missed sleep, on September 30, 2004, staff and key volunteer personnel gathered in the LEAF conference room, part of the LEAF suite of second-floor offices located on the southwest corner of the Bloomington downtown square. This relatively small room serves as a multi-function space for the Lotus organization, housing two computer workspaces; shelving and cabinets for office supplies, files, CDs from past festivals, and old Lotus T-shirts; a large table with chairs for meetings; and even the Lotus kitchen. Under walls festooned with large vertical banners displaying vibrant graphic images of past Lotus artists in mid-performance, thirteen people crammed themselves into this already-crowded room and geared up for a three-hour marathon meeting (punctuated by sandwiches that arrived mid-session) to frankly evaluate and discuss the good, the bad, the ugly, and the splendor of the 2004 Lotus Festival.

Staff members present at the meeting were Lee Williams and LuAnne Holladay; the other attendees were the chairpersons or coordinators of various Lotus committees and represented such aspects as volunteer coordination, artist hospitality, sites, visual arts, merchandise, transportation, and backline.² In some cases, these chairs had already

² Artist hospitality refers to the provision of food and other services for artists; sites refers to the physical layout, structures, and logistics of the festival; and backline refers to the amplifiers, drum kits, and other (Footnote continued on next page)



Figure 3.1: Lotus office, back meeting room. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

held post-festival evaluatory meetings with members of their own committees, the results of which were communicated via a representative at the larger debriefing. Lee led the meeting, setting the tone by expressing pride in the fact that the 2004 event was extremely well-organized and noting his opinion that, in terms of organization and logistics, the 2004 festival was the best of the most recent four or five events. He further set the agenda by giving a short list of topics to guide the discussion.

While everyone present was a festival veteran and all of these individuals were clearly devoted to the festival and its continued existence, the production process was

on-stage equipment that an artist might request to be provided for the performance. See Chapter 5 for a more detailed description of Lotus committees.

hardly a unified front. Many topics met with wide-spread agreement, but differences of opinion did exist—based on different individual experiences of the festival and participant positioning as both staff and audience—and as such the conversations were quite lively. Almost all of the meeting topics found their way somehow into Lee’s subsequent “visioning” process, and the 2005 festival model that eventually came before the Lotus Board of Directors heavily reflected these debates.

Shuttles and Transportation

In order to move approximately thirty festival artists into, out of, and around Bloomington, the festival has typically provided van shuttles with volunteer drivers to provide such necessary services as picking groups up at the Indianapolis airport (the closest to Bloomington, roughly 50 miles away) and shuttling artists back and forth between the festival hotel and downtown venues or meal locations (the 2004 hotel was just over 12 blocks away from the center of downtown). The conversation at the 2004 debriefing centered around shuttle scheduling and issues such as keeping enough vans downtown during periods with heavy numbers of airport runs; improving scheduling communication to ensure that vans were available for artist radio interviews and morning soundchecks; potentially eliminating all airport runs to Chicago (4.5 hours away); and keeping one or two vans perpetually “on-call” for unexpected needs over the four festival days (this included discussion of what a legitimate artist “need” might be—for example, a trip to get breakfast qualified, while a trip to the liquor store did not). Lee later suggested removing transportation and shuttles completely from the volunteer purview for 2005, and instead hiring a professional limousine or shuttle company to handle all

transportation needs, perhaps as part of a sponsorship agreement. Although a major departure from precedent, this idea was greeted enthusiastically, especially from the perspective of serious liability and safety concerns that have arisen over the years regarding the use of volunteer drivers. Several people volunteered to pursue this possibility with several local livery companies.

Communication

During the festival, staff and key volunteers communicated via walkie-talkie radio (and sometimes cell phone) as a means for keeping information flowing quickly in spite of the large and spread-out physical area of the festival. While this process went relatively smoothly, one radio was still missing at the time of the meeting, and the conversation thus centered on how to best regulate the distribution of walkie-talkies and keep track of possession. Some participants were also in favor of instituting stronger penalties for radio loss (i.e. paying the \$385.00 cost of replacement), while others felt this was too harsh on volunteers who might be faced with situations beyond their control. This latter group suggested covering radio use more thoroughly during volunteer training sessions. In terms of other communication issues, the new-for-2004 flow charts delineating activity and responsibility were quite popular and were voted to continue as an element of the 2005 event. One criticism was the felt need to establish more leaders who could communicate about the overall festival plan, rather than having just a few individuals who could not always be reached. This concern was deferred, pending the planned creation of a new Sites Committee (see discussion in Chapter 5). Meeting

participants also requested better and earlier communication of artist schedules, per the transportation concerns noted earlier.

Artist Hospitality and Housing

There were few set-up or logistical issues related to the Artist Hospitality area (located in the Firebay area of the John Waldron Arts Center), beyond the cancellation of several masseuses (to provide massages for artists) and the lack of a clear plan for cleaning up the location post-festival. The artist meal service, provided by the catering service housed across the street from the Firebay, also ran short of food one night; it was unclear if this was attributable to a low estimate on the part of Lotus or to insufficient preparation on the part of the caterers.

A much larger artist-related issue in 2004 was the problem of artist housing. The motel that had been used for the past several years, while cheap and therefore friendly to the festival budget, had been the subject of more and more artist complaints (and occasional refusals to stay there)—issues included rooms not cleaned, cockroaches and fleas found in units, and the lack of any central congregating point (no lobby or meeting rooms). In addition, the location's distance from the festival site created problems vis-à-vis shuttle needs, and the artists were isolated far away from festival venues and downtown restaurants, shopping, and other services. Lee's suggestion, enthusiastically received, was to move the festival hotel to a downtown location (a Courtyard by Marriott facility) that was not only higher quality but was also closely proximate (within several blocks) to the center of downtown Bloomington and all festival venues and related festival sites (hospitality area, radio station for live interviews, etc.). Although use of the

Marriott would represent a significant increase in housing costs for 2005, Lee's feeling was that this new location would alleviate many logistical problems with artist transportation and also positively impact artist experience of the festival and of Bloomington, via significantly higher-quality rooms and services as well as artist integration and immersion in "the community," both geographically and socially. This proposed change would be pursued in more detail during Lee's visioning process, and it eventually became a central component of the 2005 plan presented to the Lotus Board of Directors.

Break Stage and Other Venue Concerns

One major topic of conversation was the *Herald Times*-sponsored "break" stage, an outdoor stage that had been erected across Kirkwood Avenue at the intersection of Kirkwood and Grant Street. This stage provided free entertainment during the 30-minute breaks between sets at the ticketed venues, and the consensus was that this new-for-2004 element was "a huge success." This evaluation did not go uncontested, however. While some meeting participants loved the impact of the outdoor lighted stage and the crowds that gathered in the street, others complained that the lack of a stage manager for that site resulted in performances that ran over into other set times and created a sound-bleed problem for the ticketed venues. Lee also noted some security issues with the stage (for example, skateboarders using the structure during the day), as well as the budgetary drain—the stage itself was expensive and, as a free venue, didn't generate any additional revenue. The meeting participants ultimately voted to keep the stage on the basis of its popularity, with or without some tweaking to solve certain problems for 2005. While this

decision, as a whole, would later be overturned by Lee during the visioning process, certain elements of the *concept* of this stage would find a home in the 2005 plan, discussed near the end of this chapter.

Other venue-oriented discussions included frustration with the John Waldron Arts Center and Lee's suggestion to remove it as a venue for 2005; problems with the tent stages and increased spectatorship from non-ticketholders; and evaluation of the new-for-2004 tent stage on 6th Street, sponsored by the IU Union Board. This latter venue received generally positive feedback, but there were several areas of complaint. The downward slope of the street caused some sightline/visibility problems, and there were neighborhood concerns about the volume of the music; some meeting attendees concurred, noting that they had also left the venue because it was excessively loud and thus became an uncomfortable environment. Lee agreed and promised to pursue the causes and possible solutions for using this space in 2005.

Set-up, Tear-down, and Cleaning up

While participants were generally satisfied with the flow of festival set-up and tear-down at the 2004 event, a few small concerns included a request for more overlap in set-up volunteers' shift schedules in the afternoons; the need for a more detailed (and more widely-distributed) blueprint showing the exact locations of elements such as tents, staging, portable toilets, etc.; a request for more lighting in certain tent areas; and the occasional problem of volunteer overload when unforeseen set-up and tear-down duties arose. A larger issue had to do with the clean-up required on Sunday morning, after all festival activities had concluded. One meeting attendee emphasized the need to leave the

city streets clean, in and around every single indoor and outdoor venue: “We need to make it look like there weren’t 5000 people there the night before . . . the negative impact is huge if certain people see a mess” (Luanne Holladay, meeting remarks). All participants agreed that a Sunday morning volunteer shift should be established for clean-up in 2005 and that a volunteer or staff person should circulate prior to the shift start and make a checklist of locations and clean-up issues. It was also suggested that these volunteers should wear their distinctively lime-green Lotus Volunteer t-shirts, to create a visible presence during the clean-up process and thus generate good public relations for Lotus’s sense of civic responsibility.

Volunteers

The Volunteer Coordinator reported that 2004 volunteer recruitment was highly successful, as were the required training sessions—she felt that the organization was improving in its ability to empower volunteer leadership and decrease frustration levels. Other committee heads expressed a positive reaction to their 2004 opportunity to have increased input into volunteer selection, which allowed them to choose some experienced people instead of just receiving a list of names. Suggestions for 2005 included the need to provide more training in problem-solving and non-confrontational communication, to empower volunteers who were approached by audience members with complaints or concerns; a desire to create job-specific volunteer handbooks that incorporated the input of past volunteers who could contribute to a written record of institutional memory; and a request for volunteer name-tags to both personalize the volunteer experience and to make it easier for shift leaders to keep track of personnel. One major problem in 2004 was the

unreliable participation of fifty Indiana University undergraduates who had been required by their professor to volunteer; while about half performed good work, there were problems with the rest. While many at the meeting expressed a desire to increase the volunteer involvement of the university population, it was roundly agreed that they should no longer undertake agreements with faculty that would make volunteerism obligatory for students, no matter how hard a professor might advocate for it.

Tickets and Merchandise

Meeting participants felt that the 2004 activities at the wristband exchange and ticket sale areas went as well as or better than in past years. Some confusion had apparently existed, however, about the various types of tickets available and the different colors and other designations distinguishing ticket types (complimentary vs. advance vs. on-site purchase; single-day vs. multiple-day; adult vs. child vs. senior vs. student, etc.); the suggestion was made to have a selection of sample tickets available for ticket collectors to consult. Additionally, some merchants at ticket-sale outlets had inappropriately sold IU student tickets, confusing the advance-sale discount tickets with student tickets (student tickets were actually only available at the Indiana Memorial Union [IMU] on campus). Lee noted that the IMU sponsorship agreement was only for 2004, so in 2005 student tickets would be available at all outlets. Participants also lamented the lack of publicity about the Convention Center venue as a wristband exchange site, even though many audience members parked there; they suggested more signage and lighting to make this location more visible and thus reduce lines at the Kirkwood Avenue wristband exchange tent.

Merchandise sales were reported as going smoothly, except for a need for more volunteers to help out in the merchandise tent. There were, however, some issues with artists who wanted to sell their own merchandise, outside of the Lotus structure (artists have usually been required to check in all CDs and other merchandise, and Lotus merchandise staff has then handled the transactions; Lotus has also independently sold Lotus-branded merchandise such as t-shirts and posters). For example, one band had t-shirts they wished to sell in the merchandise tent, but there was no room to set up an extra table; another group wanted to sell souvenir items in the church venue where they were performing, much to the dismay of the church house manager (see details of this in the discussion in Chapter 4). This issue remained unresolved at the end of the meeting—some participants thought artists should be discouraged from conducting their own sales, others felt that tables should be erected in the merchandise tent but that artists would be responsible for staffing their own areas, and still others felt that it was appropriate for artists to conduct in-venue sales as long as Lotus was kept apprised of their intent.

Backline

Although the organizers and volunteers responsible for festival backline ultimately provided the appropriate equipment to the right artists in the right places at the right times, this aspect of production surfaced as an area of major concern for 2004 and a point of significant revision for 2005. Problems here seemed to center around a lack of experienced volunteers, with shifts populated largely by last-minute volunteers who had little or no knowledge of musical equipment terminology or operation—skills that should have been a pre-requisite for this fast-paced, hands-on responsibility. Many volunteers

backed out of shifts or were periodically absent. Transportation also became an issue when the large vehicles necessary for moving amplifiers and drums either had mechanical problems or never materialized at all. Proposed solutions varied, from the suggestion to include an area on the volunteer application for applicants to indicate backline experience or relevant skills, to the suggestion to involve backline volunteers earlier in the production process, thus both getting people more invested in the process and allowing for earlier identification of needs or deficiencies that should be addressed. These suggestions would later culminate in the creation of a new Backline Committee for 2005.

Visual Arts

Representatives from the Visual Arts committee reported positive feedback about the Lotus street parades, citing enthusiasm on the part of both musicians and participating audience members. One minor matter was the failure of sound to consistently reach the rear of the parade, but the major concern for 2004 was clearly the issue of the colored banners/flags used by parade participants. A local artist, also a member of the Visual Arts committee, had hand-sewn 300 patchwork flags by stitching together free-form shapes of various-colored fabric; these flags were sewn onto dowels and distributed among marchers to create the parade's vivid visual effect.



Figure 3.2: Jamesie & the All-Stars lead the 2004 Lotus street parade. (Photo by Jeffrey Hammond)

The expectation was that the flags would be returned, but apparently this was not clearly communicated to participants—at the end of the weekend, 200 of the 300 flags were missing. At the meeting, it was suggested that Lotus offer a reward for the return of flags; this offer did indeed run in the *Herald Times* a few days later:

Friday's parades were colorful, Saturday's were less so, as the flags ended up all over town (one anecdote has a bicyclist riding around downtown just the other day with a flag flying). "It's people not understanding how much goes into the fest," Williams said. "How many hours it takes to produce those banners."

"We need those back. They represent countless hours of labor by our visual arts committee," Williams said. In fact, more than 400 hours went into carefully stitching the different colored fabrics together. "We'd like them back to use for next year," he said. Lotus is offering an incentive for the return of the flags. "If people bring them back to our office, we'll give them a free CD, a Lotus CD sampler." (Perry 2004)

This plea resulted in exactly one flag being returned to the LEAF office. Discussion at the debriefing meeting had anticipated this less-than-enthusiastic response, and debate centered on methods for retrieving flags without alienating participants. The favored solution for 2005 involved assigning volunteers to gently take flags back, both at the parade ending site and at venue entrances, with a polite comment such as “Thank you for returning that” (whether or not it that is actually the individual’s intent).

Tents and “Freebies”: Contested Space (Part 1)

One major issue that came up during the debriefing and pervaded the entire visioning process was the problem of what Lee once called “freebies” and what another participant called “people crashing the party” (Jim Manion, personal interview)—the increasingly significant population of festival attendees who didn’t buy a ticket, but rather stood outside the tents and experienced the performances for free. While Lotus typically offered a number of truly free events (free offerings in 2004 included the Sunday World Spirit Concert, the *Herald-Times* break stage, two film showings, several workshops, and two family-oriented activities), in the last several years it had become common to see large crowds standing just outside the low orange fencing surrounding the outdoor tents, which were ticketed venues. This fencing ran along the line of the outer tent poles and stood very close to the stage and audience areas; while a wristband was required to physically enter the tent through the opening in the fence at the rear of the structure, someone standing just outside the fencing could have an excellent view of the stage area for free. In fact, in some cases the view from certain points outside the fence

was actually *better* than the sightline inside; in terms of sound quality, the sonic experience in both locations was nearly identical.

Although the presence of non-paying spectators had been a factor at Lotus Festivals ever since the introduction of the outdoor tent venues, festival producers felt that these crowds reached record numbers in 2004 and had begun to have a negative impact on festival ticket revenue. Lee described this problem, in detail and very publicly, in an article that appeared in the local *Herald-Times* newspaper three days after the debriefing meeting (while the article ran after the meeting, its content matches the substance of the discussion at the meeting):

Two weeks later, and many are finally shaking off the annual Lotus World Music & Arts Festival hangover. Good music, good friends and a great event are hard to let go of, and people are still talking about the excitement generated from this year's fest. But if there's anyone who needs the Alka-Seltzer and an OJ most this morning, it's the fest's father and executive director, Lee Williams. While we're still buzzing about the fantastic weather, the positive feelings and Väsen, Williams is doing some serious number crunching. And the numbers for this year's festival surprised him.

"This is the first year we did not increase tickets sales one year to the next," Williams said by phone Thursday. Williams estimates this year's attendance for the Thursday, Friday and Saturday night paid events at about 5,500, down from an estimated 6,000 last year. What was different in 2004 than 2003? Williams said a \$5 ticket increase per night was one factor. But more alarming to the longtime promoter was the number of people who chose not to pay for the festival, but attend anyway.

"(Lotus is) a mixture of free and ticketed events. It's difficult now for us, because people can afford to come and they're clearly choosing not to pay. So many of these people, literally in the hundreds, are choosing to do that," Williams said. "They're taking places from people who have bought tickets and could stand there . . . I'm guessing anywhere from 800 to 1,000 people" came to watch events without paying, he said.

What Williams is talking about are the outdoor stages available Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. This year, there were seven indoor venues that required paid wristbands for admission; There were two tents that required

wristbands to enter, and one free stage that featured music during the changeover at the other venues.

In years past, it was expected that people who couldn't afford a wristband or were not sure if they wanted to attend a world music festival would check out the free tents from the street. Then everyone gets to enjoy some part of Lotus, and they might come back and pay the next night or next year. But the scuttlebutt around town is that some felt they could have enough of a Lotus experience by not paying and standing on the sidelines at these "free" venues.

"We know for a fact that a large number of these people can afford to go," Williams said, frustrated. "The fest needs to be supported and the (paid) wristband is the primary way to do that."

Many in the community see Lotus as being a money-maker; a well-planned and well-executed event should look big time. And in 11 years, the festival has gained a reputation for quality. The reality is, Lotus is like any other not-for-profit arts group, living close to budget — though there are more zeroes at play here. The 5,500 paid attendance this year equals about \$141,000, Williams said. Add \$80,000 in money donated to Lotus in sponsorship and that's about \$221,000 — an impressive number. Then factor in grants, fund-raising and the like. But Williams estimates the cost of putting on the festival at just less than \$200,000. When all is said and done, Williams said, there is about \$60,000 left to pay two full-time employees and one part-time, as well as for the downtown office, computers, supplies, and all the other organizational expenses.

Lotus is "not in danger of going out of business," Williams stressed, but added, "We don't do that well as an organization. We're still struggling." "The festival is sophisticated, but that doesn't equal 'made of money'," he said.

The continuing money struggle doesn't mean Lotus will do away with free events. "Having free events throughout the year . . . that's fulfilling our mission," Williams said. And several free events were offered at the festival, including the World Spirit Concert, two film showings and a Saturday morning performance by Le Vent du Nord. But Williams said those events didn't draw full houses, despite being free.

. . . The outdoor stage problem doesn't have an easy solution. Bigger, more well-funded festivals than Lotus have died off. Many move to secure locations, such as large parks or fields, rather than maintaining the unique urban vibe of the downtown Lotus. And there is the risk of alienating the audience. It's an issue Williams, his staff and the Lotus board will have to study carefully for the 2005 festival. "People are not equating the

wristband purchase with support of a great event,” he said. “They're not connecting.” (Perry 2004)

When Lee raised this topic at the meeting, most attendees agreed that something needed to be done; however, there was obvious ambivalence: while people were concerned about the impact of “freebies” on ticket revenue, they also enjoyed the effect of crowds and music in the street and were wary of harming the outdoor “vibe” of the festival.

This problem remained at the forefront of the visioning process long after the meeting. Lee received some negative feedback about the article from people who felt that his remarks were out of synchrony with the inclusive, community-oriented message that Lotus promoted; Lee was also not unsympathetic to the fact that the festival has been financially inaccessible to certain groups of people. Over the course of the following months, he struggled to find solutions that protected both the finances of the festival and its much-loved, outdoor, community presence in the streets of downtown Bloomington. The solution proposed at the debriefing meeting had centered on the idea of creating a “friendly” perimeter around the tents (perhaps using visual arts elements) that expanded the boundaries of the wristband-only area further away from the tent proper. However, Lee felt strongly that the tents themselves were spaces that “confuse our audience”: “The tents are confusing, you’re not sure if it’s free or ticketed . . . while I see it as clearly being a ticketed venue, loads of people saw it as free, since you could walk right up and see an artist 10 feet away” (Lee Williams, personal interview). He went on to note that while people were not confused by the indoor venues, which were clearly ticketed, the tents effected a simultaneous indoor- and outdoor-ness, and the result was a lack of

clarity.³ Further, the presence of the truly free *Herald-Times* “break” stage, in the middle of Kirkwood Avenue, added to the confusion by putting a free performance only a few feet away from one which required a ticket. As the visioning process progressed, Lee began to lean further away from the idea of tent perimeters and more towards the idea of doing away with tent venues completely, in favor of a new type of outdoor venue for 2005: the “outdoor street stage.”

For Lee, an “outdoor street stage” would entail closing off an entire *block* as a ticketed venue, with a covered stage at one end and the entire street and sidewalk as an (uncovered) audience area. Barriers would be erected at either end of the street, and access would be via wristband checkpoints, thus ensuring that tickets were required to get anywhere close to the performance and preventing even casual access (at least visually) by non-paying spectators. In Lee’s mind, these street stages would offer a solution to the tent-oriented confusion⁴ and alleviate the “freebie” issue, while also significantly increasing the festival’s overall audience capacity (and thus revenue). Until now, the festival had only been able to sell as many tickets as there were seats in venues; however, the street-as-venue would permit an estimated 500 people to fit onto just a half-block, and potentially even more if a full block was utilized. The use of street stages, however, would make the festival weather-dependent for the first time; Lee proposed covering this risk by renting “rain sites”—indoor locations with a large capacity (although not as large as the street) that could be used if the weather turned inclement.

³ The affect generated by the outdoor tents is analyzed in more detail in Chapter 4’s discussion of venue selection criteria.

⁴ This suggests that Lee perceives the visual and kinesthetic as the primary dimensions of confusion, rather than the sonic, since the sound would still be audible outside of the barriers.

At the end of the visioning process, Lee had officially decided to eliminate all tent venues in favor of creating two outdoor street stages—one on 4th Street and one on 6th Street.⁵ Since the use of outdoor street stages was central to the 2005 festival budget and had a significant impact on all later production phases, the topic has been introduced here to orient the reader to the parameters of the idea and the context of its emergence from the debriefing and visioning processes. The street stages presented some interesting theoretical problems, especially further along in the production process, that were central to the spatial focus and primary argument of this dissertation. While Lee's creation of these venues stemmed largely from his motivation to create festival spaces that were less *confusing* for participants, I will argue later in this study that he actually wound up creating spaces that were just as or even more *ambiguous* in terms of potential affect—that by turning public streets into exclusive venues, he invited the contestation of space in a way that mobilized principles of spatial liminality. In later production phases, the street stages would emerge as one of the most intriguing and contentious features of the 2005 plan, both theoretically and practically.

Festival Geography: Imagining Space

Another important topic raised at the debriefing meeting was the question of congestion at key festival sites, particularly in the area referred to as “festival headquarters.” This was an area on Kirkwood Avenue in front of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, marked by a cluster of non-venue tents including tents for Merchandise, Wristband Exchange, Volunteer Check-in, and Ticket Sales. With large tents that

⁵ The idea to discontinue the use of tents was also motivated by Monroe Bank's tentative plan to develop their parking lot, which had been serving as a tent site.

spanned almost the entire width of the street, there was little room left for pedestrian traffic on the closed street, thus creating a situation where crowds must either thread the maze of tents and guy lines or be shunted onto sidewalks. In Lee's opinion, this resulted in a sense of congestion that he found unpleasant, and at the meeting he raised the question of the desirability of moving some tents around to other areas, thereby creating less of a concentration of structures as well as more room for crowds to maneuver.

The manner of Lee's approach to the issue suggested confidence that others would agree, and so he seemed markedly taken aback when his idea met with little or no support from those present at the meeting. In fact, most people responded with surprise, noting that the space had never felt crowded to them.⁶ The ensuing discussion rang with frequent mention of the "heart of the festival" and fears that "breaking up" this heart by moving tents would result in a dilution of the "energy" of the festival. Suggestions about shifting these tents to areas such as the Convention Center or 4th Street (between the Second Story nightclub and the John Waldron Arts Center) were met with dismay, and there was general agreement among most meeting attendees that the areas around 4th Street and the Convention Center felt "dead" and "unpleasant." There was also a sense that the need to cross Walnut Street and 3rd Street (both busy streets that are not closed during the festival) created a psychologically negative affect vis-à-vis the "energy" of the festival—that crossing trafficked streets interrupted the "flow." After the initial dismay, meeting attendees did start to brainstorm for possible solutions that they felt might address Lee's concerns but still maintain this desired sense of "energy" and "flow"

⁶ Yi-Fu Tuan discusses ways in which crowdedness is indeed a product of perception—something "felt" rather than an objective state. He notes, for example, how densely populated spaces can variously seem unpleasantly congested, warmly intimate, or even quite exhilarating, depending on perceptions of shared/conflicting activity and resultant senses of support/frustration (Tuan 1977:63-65).

(notions which remained undefined but seemed to represent a positive and shared festival affect); however, this issue remained substantively unresolved by the conclusion of the debriefing meeting.

These issues of congestion and physical festival layout all fall under the scope of the wider notion of “festival geography,” a reference to the layout of physical spaces and structures that are somehow marked as “festival space.” The term also refers to the relationship among these festival spaces, as well as the relationship among festival spaces and non-festival spaces. Festival space and festival geography could be marked in broad terms (i.e. a downtown, urban area vs. an event which occurs in a field or fairgrounds), or in specific terms pertaining to physical characteristics (i.e., indoor vs. outdoor, decorated with art elements, etc.), function (i.e., structures which serve as venues), proximity (i.e., spaces around or near venues), or types of activity or behavior permitted (i.e., streets closed to traffic and opened to pedestrians). Festival geography could also be marked by the relationship between festival and non-festival space (i.e., the juncture where a pedestrian-only area meets a trafficked street).

Although the specific problem of congestion vis-à-vis tent positioning was unresolved in the debriefing meeting, concerns about festival geography loomed large throughout the visioning process and ultimately resulted in some significant changes for 2005—new venues and new street closings emerged as a way to reconfigure the festival geography and thereby change the “festival experience” for the better. This section will use the debriefing debate and subsequent considerations and decisions as jumping-off points for exploring how the Lotus Festival geography was conceived by festival producers and how perceptions of festival geography articulated with production

decisions. In particular, it will examine how space was marked and mapped (in both a literal and a more abstract sense) to create the festival geography and its various regions, as well as how these spatial manipulations mobilized a sense of ambiguity vis-à-vis the everyday landscape of downtown Bloomington, creating a liminal space that was “not-not-Bloomington.”

Creating Centers

On maps and in production discourse, there was an area clearly defined as “festival headquarters” which served as the functional “center” of the festival geography and around which other spaces were literally and conceptually organized. This area was sited on the block of Kirkwood Avenue between Washington Street and Walnut Street, and even more specifically referred to the western end of that block, in front of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Located on this half-block were the festival Merchandise Tent (where artist CDs and Lotus souvenirs were sold), the Wristband Exchange Tent (where ticket-holders exchanged their paper tickets for the plastic festival wristbands), and the Ticket Sales Tent; in 2004 the Volunteer Check-in Tent could also be found in this area (this function was shifted to the Waldron Arts Center for 2005). Closely proximate to this site were what Lee considered the most popular venue (the Buskirk-Chumley Theater) as well as a concentration of dining options, including the coffee-and-snack-oriented Theater Café that has been extremely popular with festival-goers on the run. Discussions with producers revealed that this “festival headquarters” was perceived as the heart of festival activity, both in terms of being a sort of crossroads for audience movement around the festival geography and in terms of being a nerve-center for festival

logistics. The creation and perception of this “festival center” is a critical component of the present discussion of festival geography.



Figure 3.3: Crowds gather in the “festival headquarters” area on Kirkwood Avenue. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

The work of geographer Yi-Fu Tuan provides a useful grounding for this chapter’s consideration of festival space and festival geography. In the seminal work *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, Tuan uses as his jumping-off point the primary idea that there is an experientially-based relationship between “space” and “place”—that “the ideas ‘space’ and ‘place’ require each other for definition” and that “what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and

endow it with *value* [emphasis mine]” (Tuan 1977:6-7) He goes on to explore how this process of valuation is oriented:

Space is experienced directly as having room in which to move . . . Forward, backward, and sideways are experientially differentiated, that is, known subconsciously in the act of motion. Space assumes a rough coordinate frame centered on the mobile and purposive self . . . Purposive movement and perception, both visual and haptic, give human beings their familiar world of disparate objects in space. Place is a special kind of object. It is a concretion of value...an object in which one can dwell . . . Movements are often directed toward, or repulsed by, objects and places. Hence space can be variously experienced as the relative location of objects or places, as the distances and expanses that separate or link places, and—more abstractly—as the area defined by a network of places. (Tuan 1977:12)

The modes of experience that can effect this objectification and transformation from “space” to valued “place” include the sensorimotor, tactile, visual, and conceptual (Tuan 1977:6-7).⁷ In Tuan’s view, familiarity and valuation derive from the “identification of significant localities...and landmarks”; further, this process also involves the experiential establishment of a pattern or grid of these significant/valued sites that results in the creation of directions and an orienting center (Tuan 1977:17-18, 136). While discussion later in this chapter and later in this dissertation will deal with the other implications of Tuan’s theory about familiarity and the transformation of space into place, the present analysis will focus on the creation of a center as a crucial factor in the imposition of spatial order and orientation.

It is very significant that this “festival center” was not the same site that is perceived as the “center” of downtown Bloomington in everyday life. For most of the year, the majority of the Bloomington residents to whom I spoke identified the center of

⁷ I would also like to add the aural to this list, although Tuan discounts it as a primary mode of experiential orientation, relegating hearing to a role that is supplemental to sight.

town as the courthouse square:⁸ the home of the stately Monroe County Courthouse, an area which takes up the square block between Kirkwood (to the south), Walnut (to the east), College (to the west), and 6th Street (to the north). This square block is made to stand out on city maps (usually with large letters noting “Courthouse Square,” and/or with the area filled in with a different color or other distinctive marker), and the site itself has strong physical characteristics that clearly mark it as central or suggest centrality. For example, on at least three sides of the square, the courthouse lawn is higher than street-level, and this feature of the landscape combines with the architecture of the courthouse to make the structure the highest point of the cityscape. Further, the structural design of the courthouse draws the eye to *its* center, using the device of a four-sided symmetrical edifice topped with a central dome that is, in turn, topped with a spire and weather vane. In addition, the architectural style of the courthouse is imposing, striking, and dramatically different from that of any other building in its immediate environs (or any other building in town, for that matter).

Other features of the site include stairs and pathways on each corner of the square that all converge on the central building; year-round Christmas lights that radiate from the dome outward to points around the square block; as well as a unique parking layout around this block—although almost all other parking in the downtown area is parallel, all parking around the courthouse square is perpendicular, with cars pointing towards the square on all sides. Further, this square block is the point at which east/west and north/south street designations switch (i.e., N. College becomes S. College, E. Kirkwood

⁸ Several conversations suggested that IU students might not necessarily identify the square as the center of town, instead citing points closer to campus; this could reflect a differently-experienced spatial order oriented towards different patterns of significance.

becomes W. Kirkwood, etc.) and address numbers reset accordingly. Besides all of these physical features, the courthouse square also has other characteristics which identify it as the middle of town. The courthouse building is the seat of county government and so is functionally central; in addition, its governmental role separates and distinguishes it from all of the retail establishments that surround it.

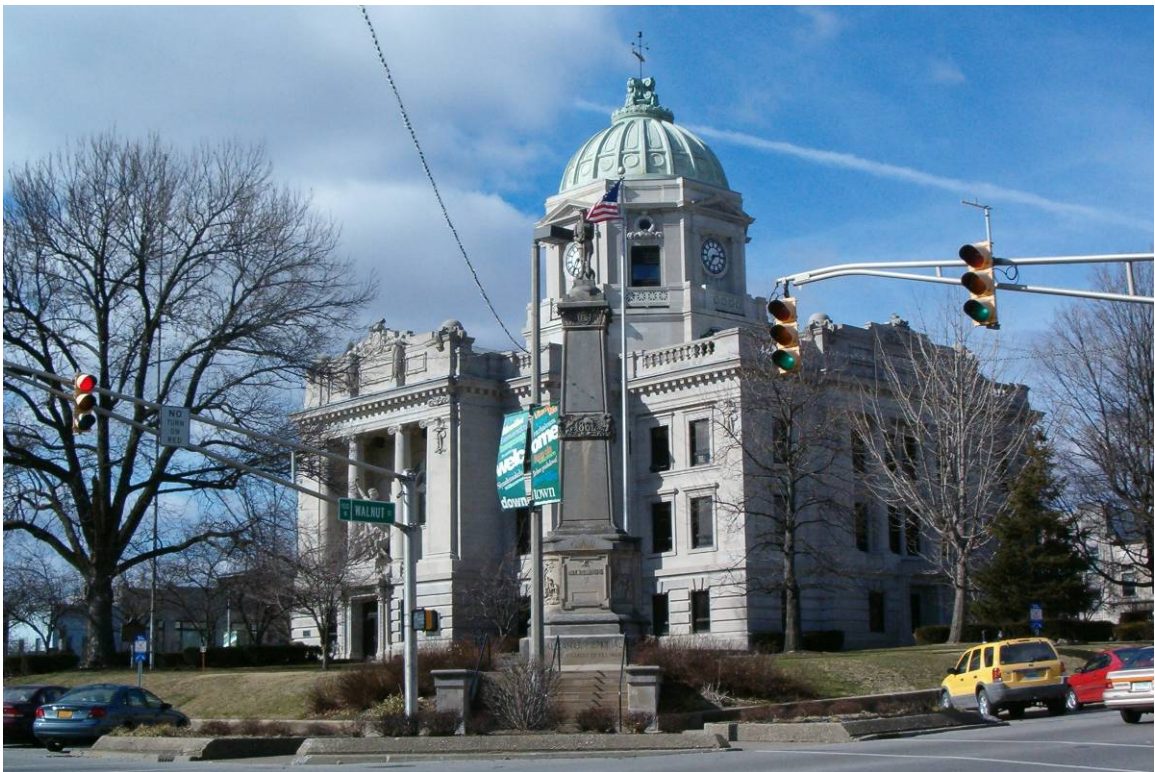


Figure 3.4: Monroe County Courthouse, Bloomington, Indiana. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

Given how strongly the courthouse square indexes centrality, it is worth investigating how festival space was configured so as to experientially shift the perceived “center” of the downtown area from the square (as in everyday life) to a seemingly arbitrary site less than a half-block away. During the festival, the “headquarters” on Kirkwood was teeming with people and activity, while the courthouse square was nearly

empty—a complete reversal of the everyday pattern. So how did the festival accomplish this shift? Drawing on Tuan’s ideas about space taking on a coordinate frame of reference that is based in experience, the “purposive self,” and the objectification of centers of value, I would like to suggest that the shift occurred as the festival provided an alternate frame of reference and re-valued, alternate points of significance within the various modes of experience—visual, sensorimotor, aural, conceptual, and combinations of these—that help define space and, thereby, place.

Visually, the festival center was established in two ways. First, the erection of large, colorful tents and new lighting drew attention to the new site, as did Lotus banners



Figure 3.5: Setting up the 2005 festival headquarters on Kirkwood Avenue. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

and visual art elements (this aspect of visual transformation will be addressed in much greater detail in Chapter 5). The tents provided new architectural landmarks, and the lighting made the area on Kirkwood much brighter than the courthouse square, which is

typically poorly lit at night. Second, however, the festival center was also established visually through the use of maps which offered representations of centrality. Whereas maps of downtown Bloomington usually put the courthouse square at or near the middle of the page, the festival maps de-centered the square and moved the Kirkwood area closer to the middle of the representation. Further, this visual cue was accompanied by a linguistic cue—calling this area the “Headquarters” on the map immediately indexed the notion of either physical or functional centrality.

From a sensorimotor perspective, the entire festival geography was intentionally oriented to this site as center. Lee frequently mentioned how his venue choices (discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter) had a lot to do with “shaping a center” for the festival and how the establishment of that center was based on a notion of “walking distance”—in Lee’s mind, no point in the festival geography should be more than three or four blocks out from that central point (Lee Williams, personal interview). Further, movement around and across the festival geography necessitated moving frequently through or close to this area, and this area was also intentionally placed outside what Lee considered the most popular venue—the Buskirk-Chumley Theater—and so received a great deal of traffic as people entered and exited that venue. Functionally, since this Headquarters area housed the Merchandise Tent, it was the only place within the festival geography to buy CDs or other merchandise; the area was also the most proximate to a variety of restaurants, cafes, and other food options. Aurally, this site drew sonic attention by means of recorded music played constantly in the Merchandise Tent, and in 2004 a non-festival-affiliated drum circle sprang up on the sidewalk close to the Buskirk, creating a loud, incessant, and rhythmic sound that was

audible from some distance away (this practice was discontinued in 2005, after many festival volunteers and staff complained about it during the debriefing process).

From the perspective of conceptual modes of experience, it is helpful to invoke Tuan again and his idea that space is also evaluated and objectified as place by means of dramatizations—by space that is configured and experienced as “dramatizing the aspirations, needs, and functional rhythms of personal and group life” (Tuan 1977:178). Conceptually, the Festival Headquarters became the center of the festival because it was the place where audience festival experiences began. The Wristband Exchange Tent was the first site of engagement with the festival for all audience members, as each person was required to exchange his/her paper ticket for the plastic wristband that would permit access to all venues. As such, the site dramatized beginnings and origins as part of the festival rhythm and thereby was conferred orientational significance. Additionally, this shared group behavior and the presence of crowds with shared goals (getting wristbands, buying CDs) helped to facilitate a sense of *communitas*—a notion often defined as a sort of pre-objective sense of “we”-ness—that affectively emphasized this site as one of value.

Producers were highly aware that they have constructed this site as a festival center, as evidenced by the earlier discussion about congestion that surfaced in the debriefing meeting. Using devices such as clusters of tents and the establishment of sites of functionality that were crucial to festival operation (ticket sales, wristband exchange, merchandise sales), as well as a venue layout that necessitated movement through this half-block of Kirkwood, festival producers successfully displaced the courthouse square and created a new space that was visually, aurally, kinesthetically, and conceptually

marked as a “center,” even though it was not literally in the center of the festival geography or in the center of town. The power and effectiveness of this shift was further evidenced by the reluctance of producers, during the debriefing meeting, to move or change this site to reduce crowding; in fact, as just noted, the crowds and concentration of activity appeared to be perceived as part of the “energy” that made this center exist (vs. a “dilution” that would affectively de-center the site).

Marking Spaces and Defining Boundaries

After the establishment of a festival center, the rest of the festival geography was defined both in relationship to that center (as previously noted) and by other means. Just as producers intentionally created a central point that is partially defined by its proximity to venues and other festival elements, the rest of the festival geography was also defined by proximity to important festival sites, as well as by other types of relationship to both festival and non-festival spaces. Venues were an obvious example of festival space—both indoor and outdoor spaces were defined by their establishment as performance locales, whether they had previously been performances spaces or they were newly defined as such for festival purposes.

In production discourse, however, the “festival geography” included more than just venues. This geography was also considered to *integrate* indoor and outdoor venues, and as such festival space came to be comprised of the spaces around and between venues, as well: points of entry and exit, ante-rooms and ante-spaces where people waited in line to enter venues or performance spaces, and corridors—sidewalks, streets, alleyways—that people used to move between venue structures. Festival space also

included non-performance sites, such as the locations where people purchased tickets or merchandise, gathered with friends, viewed visual art elements, etc. So how was the rest of this geography defined by producers, and what kind of role did it play in production decisions?

Lee and other festival producers clearly perceived the festival geography largely in terms of movement and peoples' kinesthetic engagement with the festival. As mentioned earlier, issues of proximity and distance played a large role here. During the visioning process, Lee frequently talked about his desire to keep the festival geography "close-knit" and "geographically tight," while venues such as the Convention Center were frequently criticized for being in the "far reaches" of the festival. Producers knew that people would be moving between venues many times over the course of an evening—a product of the festival model of simultaneous performances, as well as an established part of the festival "culture"—and so the goal in defining a festival geography was to minimize the distances traveled.

The notion of distance has both a spatial and a temporal component. From a spatial perspective, the production goal was to maintain the "energy" of the festival center as much as possible, and this seems to jibe nicely with Tuan's ideas about the role of value in differentiating space. Performance venues were the primary sites of value within the festival geography, as was the festival center, and so intermediate spaces were conferred significance on the basis of their relationship to these sites of value and become "festival space" (objectified space, or "place") only insofar as they could be experientially connected to them. Therefore, the shorter the distances between venues, the more likely it was that the corridors would affectively remain part of the "festival"

framework for spatial orientation, via one or more modes of experience. The further the distance from such visual, aural, conceptual, or kinesthetic cues or points of significance, the more likely it was that the intermediate space would fade back into being undifferentiated space (rather than place)⁹ and the festival affect (the “energy” or “vibe” described by producers) would begin to be diluted. Additionally, there was an operative temporal component in the perception of distance. Many festival goers and producers complained to me about the feeling of “missing music” during the period of transition from one performance site to another—thus, a sort of temporal “distance” might also be part of the experiential evaluation of non-venue spaces.

“Festival geography” was therefore relational and in part defined via proximity to venue spaces and the festival center—the closer a space was to one of these, the more likely it was to be experienced as “festival” space. However, producers also defined the festival geography by other types of relationships, most notably the relationship of contrast to non-festival spaces.¹⁰ This is significant because while the notion of distance was connected to movement and oriented to the immediacy of sensory experience, the relationship between festival and non-festival space is conceptually more abstract and provides a framework in which to explore how festival producers conceived of a larger notion of “festival space” (extrapolated from parts such as venues, corridors, centers, etc.) that was subsequently represented through maps, language, and other forms of discourse.

⁹ Henri Lefebvre’s ideas about “empty space” are also suggestive here: “Empty space in the sense of a mental and social void which facilitates the socialization of a not-yet-social realm is actually merely a *representation of space*. Space is conceived of as being transformed into ‘lived experience’ by a social ‘subject.’” (Lefebvre 1991:190).

¹⁰ Both Tuan and Lefebvre discuss the role of perceived opposition or contrast in the emergence of place-consciousness. See, for example, Tuan 1977:170-171 and Lefebvre 1991:192-193.

The single most important way in which festival producers marked festival space in contrast to non-festival space was by the closure of certain Bloomington streets to vehicle traffic, resulting in pedestrian-only zones that were separated from trafficked streets by the use of temporary barricades.¹¹ The streets chosen for closure typically aligned with venue or administrative structures and the most-used corridors between these structures. The decision to initiate such closures came several years after the Lotus Festival's inception and was made on the basis of safety considerations for the large numbers of people moving through these spaces during the festival; it was only later that producers began erecting venue tents and other festival tents in these areas. These pedestrian-only zones formed the majority of what was considered "festival space" by festival producers; these zones combined with venue locations to define the total concept of "festival geography" that was mobilized in discourse and on maps.

This total concept was also, subsequently, defined by Lee and other producers as having a distinct "perimeter." The influential philosopher Henri Lefebvre, in his seminal work *The Production of Space*, discusses the importance of *boundaries* in defining types of space and orienting spatial relationships (Lefebvre 1991:193); for Lotus producers, the festival perimeter played this crucial role. By creating "edges" defined by walking vs. driving, producers established spaces on either side of these boundaries that were visually, affectively, and kinesthetically different from each other. There were problems with this perimeter, however—specifically, it was not contiguous, in the sense that there were two distinctly-bounded pedestrian-only zones that were not connected. Up through and including the 2004 festival, the use of the Convention Center and the Second Story

¹¹ The issue of street closures is a major topic of Chapter 5.

nightclub as venues necessitated that festival goers cross the busy, heavily-trafficked north-south arteries of Walnut Street and College Avenue, streets that the City of Bloomington refused to permit Lotus to close. This created a significant safety issue, from the perspective of the Lotus organization, as staff and volunteers had witnessed several near-accidents as festival attendees crossed these streets against traffic lights or at points other than crosswalks, racing to get to another venue as quickly as possible so as not to miss any music. The Lotus Festival further contributed to this risk by exponentially increasing the number of people crossing those streets in the first place—Lee estimated that Lotus put over 6000 people in that small area at very specific, concentrated times each night of the festival, and they were all crossing those streets multiple times.

There was also a perceived negative affect associated with the need to cross these streets to reach other parts of the festival. During the debriefing meeting and at other times during the visioning process, Lee and other festival producers relayed audience feedback such as “the whole trip down there is unpleasant” and “I feel like I’m leaving the festival now because I’m crossing this big street with cars buzzing by.” Because the boundary of festival space was so strongly aligned with the distinction between pedestrian zones and vehicle zones, the physical crossing of a trafficked street aligned with a sense of crossing *out* of festival space. Further, my data suggests that entering the far reaches of festival space (the venues that lie east of Walnut) did not necessarily correspond to a sense of coming back *into* a space that was festivalized; rather, many consultants described those far venues, especially the Convention Center, as feeling rather separate from the larger festival “vibe.”

For reasons of both safety and affect, therefore, one of Lee's biggest priorities during the 2005 visioning process was to try to remedy this non-contiguous festival perimeter and instead create a single perimeter that was coterminous with the area defined by closed streets. Part of this occurred through processes of venue selection (described in the next chapter), but the other part of the 2005 plan was the attempt to secure the closure of one or more blocks of Walnut Street, such that venues on the west side of Walnut could be accessed without crossing active lanes of traffic. Lee successfully presented this idea to the new mayor of Bloomington, as noted towards the end of this chapter, and this new street closure played a large role in his overall conception of the 2005 Lotus Festival.

Juxtaposition, Ambiguity, and the Redefinition of Place

With the exception of tents, the basic elements of the festival space and festival geography¹²—streets, sidewalks, buildings—were not new to the downtown landscape; further, festival space did not *replace* the everyday space of downtown Bloomington, but rather was layered onto existing features that did not disappear when the festival took over.¹³ For example, the “edges” of festival space that were created by strategic street closures subsequently divided space into “walking” and “driving”; however, this did not erase the streets and sidewalks within that space that typically mark the distinction between spaces for walking and spaces for driving. The construction of a festival center

¹² The distinction between festival space and festival geography is that festival geography refers to the conception of the festival space(s) as a *network of spatial relations* that include edges, centers, landmarks and points of significance, etc.

¹³ See [Appendix A](#) for maps which represent some aspects of this spatial/conceptual layering.

did not obliterate the courthouse square, and in fact both the courthouse and the square were clearly visible from the “new” center. Unlike festivals that occur in a field or fairgrounds, where festival elements might completely define those spaces for the duration of the event, the Lotus festival’s downtown location was not a blank canvas. As such, “Lotus geography” should be more accurately considered a juxtaposition rather than a new construction, and I would argue that the partialities and ambiguities that resulted from this juxtaposition were what enable the different regions of the festival geography to be experienced as “festivalized” space.

As discussed previously, Yi-Fu Tuan posits that the transformation of space into place happens as a result of spatial organization and orientation to significant localities and landmarks whose value emerges from experience. Undifferentiated space is blurry, while place is comprised of objects. Tuan goes on to note the role of movement and sensory engagement in this process, as well as the ability to extrapolate and think more abstractly: “When space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place. Kinesthetic and perceptual experience as well as the ability to form concepts are required for the change if the space is large” (Tuan 1977:12, 73).

For city residents, including festival producers, the space of downtown Bloomington is clearly place. For nearly anyone who lives here, the area where the festival takes place is unavoidably familiar—it is a bustling district that houses numerous retail and entertainment establishments, restaurants, government offices, and banks. Three of the city’s primary roadways converge here (Kirkwood, Walnut, and College), and the local community radio station is also sited in this area, with the Indiana University campus only a few blocks away. Further, Bloomington is a bike- and

pedestrian-oriented town, and so most people have a level of intimacy with this area that is greater than what might be experienced solely by car.

So what happened when the festival juxtaposed its elements onto this thoroughly familiar place? Using Tuan's framework, I would like to suggest that the methods used by Lotus producers to construct "festival space" functionally re-assigned and demanded new kinesthetic and perceptual skills for the downtown space. The erection of barricades and the closure of streets allowed one to walk on the asphalt where one usually drove; the placement of tents, lighting, and visual art elements on Kirkwood Avenue created a new attentional and functional center; festival maps highlighted new landmarks or moved existing landmarks out of the positions in which they were usually represented. Points of orientation, significance, and value were shifted, as festivalization partially disoriented familiar space¹⁴ and disrupted (but didn't completely erase) the assignation of place. This contributed to a state of ambiguity and spatial liminality, as participants were put into an environment that was simultaneously familiar (place) and unfamiliar (de-objectified, disoriented, and open to re-valuation and reorientation according to different criteria for what is significant). Such a process thus opened the door for the re-valuation of space into a *new* place that was neither familiar Bloomington nor unfamiliar blur, but rather a uniquely "festival" place that was "not-not-Bloomington"¹⁵

The clearest illustration of this doubly-negative, ambiguous state, as it pertains to festival geography, occurred at the points of juncture between festival and non-festival

¹⁴ Also potentially useful here are phenomenological perspectives on the notion of "familiarity" which incorporate concepts such as reproductions, retentions, protentions, anticipations, and frames of reference. These ideas are discussed further in Chapter 4. See, for example, Schutz 1976.

¹⁵ Based on Richard Schechner's ideas about theater and the concept of "not-not-me." See Schechner 1985:35-116.

space, especially where pedestrian zones met traffic zones. At the 2004 festival, I personally observed many festival goers step past the barricades at the western end of Kirkwood and jump back suddenly as cars flew up Walnut Street. Lee and other festival producers described similar scenes, and Lee once commented that:

People get used to walking in this area where the streets are closed, so they just step out and forget that Walnut isn't closed . . . they're thinking about the music, or it's easy for [people] to just assume that everything is shut down. There's also a social element . . . people are excited, walking and talking with friends, and they are distracted from a normal conscious level of awareness . . . not paying attention, sort of like talking on a cell phone while driving. (Lee Williams, personal interview)



Figure 3.6: Barricades at the intersection of Kirkwood and Walnut, 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Lee even described personally engaging that same kind of ambiguity while walking around town with other festival producers and talking about the possible street closures. As he was envisioning the geography, he got so caught up in imagining that things were closed that he actually stepped out into the street and into traffic.

It is easy to see how this process of disorientation could create safety hazards when people wander outside of the festival frame. The fact that visual boundaries (barriers) didn't work very well is just one example of the ways in which space within the boundary was ambiguous. The barriers were not as meaningful because the areas within them were still streets, just with new behaviors mapped onto familiar structures; everyday visual cues (sidewalk vs. asphalt) were devalued but not eliminated. When the same structures continued outside the barriers, the transgressive behavior (i.e., walking in the middle of the road) that was permitted inside liminal "festival" space was no longer acceptable.

Another way to look at this process of the dis- and reorientation of sensorimotor skills vis-à-vis spatial organization is to consider Lefebvre's ideas about spatial practice as part of a triad which underscores his entire philosophy of the production of space. Briefly, this model posits three moments or realms of spatial experience: spatial practice (the perceived), representations of space (space as conceptualized through a system of signs), and representational spaces (space as "lived" through the overlay of physical space and its associated symbols and images). Lefebvre goes on to state that "the lived, conceived and perceived realms should be interconnected, so that the 'subject' . . . may move from one to the other without confusion" (Lefebvre 1991:38-39, 40). While he ultimately takes this idea in a Marxist direction that doesn't really pertain to the present

study, it is interesting to apply this concept to the juxtapositions and disorientations that defined the Lotus festival geography. It is possible to posit that, according to this model, the physical and symbolic shifts engendered by Lotus's street closures, re-centering, and re-mapping put codified spatial practice into a state of tension with new representations of space, thus creating a representational space that was characterized by ambiguity and potential confusion.

Some support for this idea comes in Lee's description about a "built-in knowledge factor" with the festival event—the need to acquire a specifically "Lotus" skill-set in order to successfully navigate the festival. The acquisition of that knowledge was a required component in the producers' conception of the event as a "voyage of discovery," a concept that comprised movement, unfamiliarity, and reorientation. Lee commented that "since the whole thing is conceived as a 'voyage of discovery,' maybe it's not such a bad thing to have part of it be figuring out how the event works . . . going and sorting it all out is part of a 'rite of passage' into Lotus" (Lee Williams, personal interview). He went on to describe how veteran festival goers typically offer suggestions and tips to first-timers who are confused about how the festival is structured.

That example also highlights that the disorienting, ambiguous quality of festival space and festival geography is well-known to festival producers. While it is not discussed in terms like "liminal," it is clear that the juxtapositions of "everyday" and "festival" spaces were an intentional element of the festival model. In many conversations throughout the visioning process, Lee emphasized to me that he, the Board of Directors, and other long-time festival producers and participants have always felt that the downtown location was an important part of the identity of the Lotus Festival, with

strong resistance to the idea of moving the festival into a field where logistics would be infinitely easier. Using words like “unique vibe,” participants conveyed awareness of a particular festival affect that emerged from the intentional juxtaposition and tension between familiar and festival spaces. The basic theoretical foundation that I have established here—that the disorientation of the familiar enabled the mobilization of new sensorimotor and perceptual skills and permitted the partial re-assignment of place to enable a “not-not-here” liminality—does not only apply, however, to the establishment and conceptualization of a “festival geography” that was the primary goal of the visioning phase. Later chapters will expand on this concept by illustrating how producers continued to seek the “unique vibe” through the construction of other types of spatial tensions in processes of venue selection, appropriations of public space, and the transformation of streetscapes through the use of visual art elements.

An Increased Role for the City of Bloomington

In addition to the debriefing and subsequent considerations already presented here, one other new development should be mentioned as having a significant impact on the visioning phase of the 2005 Lotus Festival: the increased participation of the City of Bloomington and the Office of the Mayor. Prior to this point, the City had had a very limited role vis-à-vis the festival. Although most city officials were philosophically in support of the event and of the Lotus mission, this had manifested itself in little to no financial or logistical support, save things such as a small, one-time capital investment grant that had been channeled into the creation of stage backdrops. In November 2004, however, Bloomington residents elected a new mayor—Mark Kruzan—and Lee used the

change to attempt the active cultivation of a closer relationship between the City and Lotus. In a meeting that took place on December 15, 2004, Lee met with the mayor to provide information about the festival and its positive economic impact on the town; the mayor was receptive and agreed on the festival's considerable importance to the quality of life in Bloomington as well as its role in positively shaping opinions about the city.

Two groundbreaking accomplishments resulted from this meeting. The first success involved verbal mayoral support for Lee's request to close part of Walnut Street for the first time ever (as noted in the earlier discussion of festival geography), something which the City had never been willing to even *consider* in past years. The second accomplishment was the promise of \$15,000 from the Office of the Mayor to support the creation of more free Lotus activities that would be accessible to families (perceived as the largest demographic for whom the festival isn't affordable) and other individuals who could not afford the festival ticket price; the suggested location was Third Street Park, a city park located just south of 3rd Street between Washington and Lincoln Streets. The stated goal of this initiative was to provide substantial free musical offerings and other activities during the daytime hours for underserved audiences, defined as both low-income residents and as families with children who typically have neither the funds for multiple tickets nor the stamina for the long Lotus evenings.

While this promise of funding was not formalized until July 2005 (see the Appendix for the [official press release](#) and a partial transcription of the press conference that accompanied the announcement), both Mayor Kruzan and Lee felt confident enough about the proposal to proceed with the planning long before a check was officially signed. Although initially reluctant about some aspects of the proposal, Lee quickly

adopted the Third Street Park initiative (later named “Lotus in the Park”) as a factor in his visioning for 2005. This dissertation will not treat this new development in any detail, beyond mention of a few noteworthy items both practical and theoretical. First, Lee almost immediately conceived of Lotus in the Park as an effective replacement for the popular but confusing and financially-unsound *Herald-Times* break stage. Interviews with Lee during the visioning phase revealed that he conceived of the Lotus in the Park initiative as a good way to help resolve the “freebie” problem and actually create *unambiguous* festival space—things that were “clearly free” both temporally (in the afternoon, well prior to ticketed evening events) and spatially (far away from ticketed venues, and especially the ticketed outdoor sites). This served as yet another illustration of the ways in which Lee and festival producers were acutely aware of the impact of spatially-oriented decisions, even if they did not conceive or express this awareness via the more esoteric, philosophical frameworks employed for analysis in this study. Second, Lee also foresaw the free, family-oriented Lotus in the Park as a good public-relations move that could cushion some of the negative backlash to his public remarks about the “freebie” issue. Finally and more logistically pertinent, this increased financial partnership with the City of Bloomington also translated into the increased participation of City representatives in the nuts-and-bolts production of the festival event, including the presence of City employees at certain volunteer committee meetings and increased City oversight of the street closing process.

Vision into Budget: A Plan Receives the Go-Ahead

In a mid-November interview, Lee noted that the budget-design process is the “phase I really like”—an opportunity to apply his “fascination” with numbers to the process of translating his vision into a financial model. The ways in which the vision took numeric shape were numerous and complex. For example, eliminating a single venue could save \$10,000-\$12,000 in artist fees and artist-related expenses, venue rental fees, PA system rental, and lighting costs. Changing hotels from a \$40/night location to a \$90/night location could add thousands of dollars to lodging costs but could also result in significant savings in transportation costs if the new hotel was closer to the festival site. Lee described the budget-creation process as involving discussions with committee heads about their projected financial needs, estimations of the financial impact of proposed changes to the festival model (venues, rental needs, etc.), and educated guesses about future income and revenue—all in the service of coming up with a detailed sense of what the next festival will be and trying to come reasonably close to what actually happens. To put it another way, the budget process involved taking a very large-scale event with many components and examining past successes and failures; creating new ideas while considering all of the possible ramifications for such stakeholders as audience members, Board members, committee members, and the City of Bloomington; predicting ticket sales, fundraising, and sponsorship incomes; and then putting it all into numbers and “selling” it to the Board of Directors for approval and permission to carry the plan forward into reality (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Ultimately, the model and budget proposal Lee presented to the Board involved a number of significant changes from 2004 that can be traced back to discussions at the

debriefing meeting. While some of these changes will be discussed in greater detail later in this dissertation, in short the proposed 2005 model incorporated the following *major* components:

- A shift to the Courtyard by Marriott hotel on College Avenue, a location that was in close proximity to the festival venues, artist hospitality areas, and the WFHB radio station, and allowed for artist immersion in downtown Bloomington.
- The proposed closure of one or more blocks of Walnut Street, to improve festival safety by creating one, contiguous pedestrian festival perimeter.
- The elimination of the John Waldron Arts Center, the Monroe Country Convention Center, and the Second Story nightclub as performance venues.
- The elimination of the *Herald Times*-sponsored break stage, with the retention of its key elements (free, in the street) in other newly-proposed elements.
- The shifting of free elements to the City-funded Lotus in the Park event in Third Street Park, to take place in the afternoon on the Saturday of the festival (September 24, 2004).
- The creation of two “outdoor street stages,” on 4th and 6th Streets, that would replace all tent venues and involve closing off entire city blocks as wristbanded, ticket-only-access venues with artists performing on covered stages and the rest of the venue comprised of the street area, with no additional structures or covering.
- Since outdoor stages would be weather-dependent, “rain sites” would have to be available. Tentatively, the Convention Center and the John Waldron Arts Center would be reserved as rain sites.
- The intention to pursue professional transportation options and eliminate volunteer drivers.

At a Board of Directors meeting in late December, Lee presented his [2005 budget proposal](#) and it was officially approved.¹⁶ The major changes would go forward, with certain items—the outdoor street stages, in particular—flagged for close examination and careful post-festival evaluation in terms of their potential impact on long-range strategic

¹⁶ The details of the 2005 budget are available in the Appendix of this dissertation.

planning. While it was understood that changes and adjustments could and would certainly occur as the year progressed, the festival production process had been officially sanctioned to proceed into its next phase—programming, where imagined space morphed into real space to be filled with music.

Programming the Festival: Choosing Sounds and Spaces

Introduction

After the 2005 Lotus Festival budget was approved by the Board of Directors in late December 2004, in early January 2005 attention turned to the second major phase of festival production: programming. From a terminology standpoint, “programming” refers to the process of selecting the performing artists who will comprise the festival line-up and appear before audiences over the course of the four-day event. At LEAF, this process was largely Lee Williams’s purview, and it was in this phase that his extensive past experience as a booking agent became most evident. Programming a festival of this size and complexity involves much more than just liking a CD and then signing an artist up. In reality, this process lasted several months and countless hours, with Lee taking into consideration a number of complex and often competing factors that included musical quality, educational potential, budget, schedule/availability, and spatial suitability.

The programming process for 2005 lasted from roughly January until early August, with the bulk of activity occurring from March to July.¹ Even though this was the period of actual bookings, however, programming was in many ways a year-round endeavor for Lee. As a festival like Lotus grows, it tends to develop a name and a presence in the larger world music network; for example, a producer may talk to agents, artists, and other presenters at world music conferences; artists may mention positive festival experiences to other artists; or agents of past festival artists may have the event on their radar for the other artists whom they represent. So, in addition to the promotional materials Lee specifically solicited from the artists who caught his attention via CD, concert, or conference showcase performance, he also received promotional packets and promotional CDs year-round from artists wishing to be considered, from agents who wanted to make Lee aware of a new face on their roster, or from friends—Bloomington-based or other presenters/promoters—who had heard something in which they thought Lee would (or should) be interested. These promotional materials typically included artist bios, CDs (either actual product or shorter demos compiled specifically for promotional purposes), collections of positive reviews and press quotes, contact or website information, and sometimes DVDs or videotapes of performance footage (especially if the artist's work involved a strong dance or other visual component). In addition to new materials, there were artists whom Lee had really wanted but was unable to book for a prior festival, for various reasons, and so they and their packets reappeared in the pile for a second chance. From this flood of incoming information, and after hours

¹ In late February and early March, LEAF annually produces a series of educational-outreach performances and workshops, called "Lotus Blossoms," that bring world music artists into local elementary schools. Lotus Blossoms takes up the bulk of staff and volunteer time from January to early March, temporarily displacing festival work.

and hours of sorting, research, and intensive listening, in early January of 2005 Lee created his first, long “wish-list” of potential artists and programming began in earnest.

Developing Wish-lists: Conferences, Collaborations, and Midwest Geography

In February 2005, Lee, LuAnne Holladay, and LuAnne’s husband Bill went to Montreal to attend the joint Folk Alliance/Strictly Mundial conference, a gathering of music-industry professionals (artists, agents, managers, producers/programmers, booking agents, and publicists) that included numerous “showcases”—opportunities to see short live performances by music artists who might be of interest to attendees. While such a conference was not unique to the world music scene (other examples include the annual WOMEX and Globalfest conferences), this Montreal event was of particular interest to Lee because of the simultaneity of two conferences that had typically occurred separately and tended to feature different types of music—Folk Alliance, which focused more on North American folk music or American “roots” music, and Strictly Mundial, which focused on “world” music more broadly. As such, the joint conference provided a valuable opportunity for Lee to not only access information and performers of “world” music, but also to access performers of the American genres—old-time, bluegrass, Cajun, blues, folk singer/songwriter—that have been part of the Lotus definition of “world music” (unlike many other “world music” festivals which exclude American or Western genres).

Over the course of several days at this conference, Lee saw approximately 35 artist showcases and spent considerable time in the shared Folk Alliance/Strictly Mundial exhibition area, a hall full of booths run by record labels, agents, promoters, festival

representatives, and individual artists. According to Lee's report after the conference, attendance at the meeting, exhibitions, and showcases had several important benefits for Lotus and the festival. First, Lee emphasized that, for him, the best way to judge an artist's quality and "fit" with the festival was to see that artist in live performance; to do this, it was absolutely necessary for him to go outside of Bloomington. Unlike in bigger cities where world music artists might come to perform at the behest of any number of booking agents, in Bloomington the world music scene is, by and large, the purview of LEAF—if Lotus doesn't bring these artists, they probably won't come, and so Lee must seek outside exposure to new programming possibilities. Second, the conference aided in the cultivation of valuable networks and contacts that also impacted potential bookings. In this way, it served as a resource for information about artists and booking opportunities and the gathering was also a chance to spread the word about the Lotus Festival and cultivate its reputation as a good festival. Nonetheless, Lee felt that Lotus/Bloomington was still considered a "small-town" market and he lamented that artist tour dates often filled up rapidly with higher-dollar, larger-market offers that could keep a festival like Lotus among artists' or agents' second or third choices.

According to Lee, geography also played a major role in Lotus's ability to attract touring artists—sometimes hindering bookings, and sometimes actually helping the festival to attract more desirable artists. Unlike cities on the East and West coasts which are in relatively close proximity and tend to have excellent connecting transportation options, Midwest cities have typically been perceived as separated by vast distances and as more expensive and less convenient to access. For this reason, it has not been uncommon for programmers and booking agents in the Midwest to organize block-

booking programs, which help attract tours on the basis of a practice known as “routing.” “Routing” involves organizing a series of temporally- and geographically-proximate gigs in smaller cities, which serve as “stepping stones” for artists making their way from one big Midwestern city to another. Such opportunities tend to be attractive to touring artists who would otherwise have numerous non-income-generating days between performances in major urban centers; while the smaller-market bookings might pay less, they are far more appealing than no bookings at all.

Over the years, this awareness of the practicality of creating attractive routing opportunities led to a three-way programming collaboration among three Midwestern world music festivals: Bloomington’s Lotus World Music and Arts Festival; World Music Festival: Chicago; and the Madison World Music Festival in Madison, Wisconsin (home to the University of Wisconsin).² The festivals were intentionally temporally contiguous—first Madison, then Chicago, then Bloomington. Programmers for these three festivals tried to agree on and “share” a number of artists; this was not only beneficial for all three events, in that it allowed the producers to offer artists an appealing kind of ready-made tour itinerary with several stops, but it was also specifically beneficial to a lower-budget festival like Lotus, which could piggyback onto artists whose fees would otherwise be out of reach.³ For example, Lee noted that the Madison and Chicago festivals tended to prefer booking non-U.S.-based artists. If a higher-budget event like the Chicago festival covered the immense cost of, hypothetically, flying a ten-

² In 2005, the second-annual Madison World Music Festival occurred from September 15-17; the seventh-annual World Music Festival: Chicago occurred from September 16-22.

³ At the time of writing, Lotus had been collaborating with Madison for 2 years and with Chicago for 7 years.

piece band from South Africa, a smaller festival like Lotus could benefit from the fact that that the group was already on U.S. soil and would thus be less expensive to bring to Bloomington than if Lotus alone booked them. The most significant manifestation of this tri-festival collaboration was a face-to-face “world music summit” (Lee’s phrase) that occurred in Madison on March 12-13, 2005, and involved representatives from all three events—Lee for Lotus, Mike Orlove for the Chicago festival, and a nine-person committee (including two student representatives) for Madison. Over two days, the group auditioned countless CDs and DVDs, compared the individual wish-lists prepared by each producer prior to the meeting, and discussed each event’s programming priorities; at the end of the weekend, Lee returned home with a new, collaboratively-generated [wish-list](#). Although he would subsequently apply his own judgment and add many Bloomington-only artists to the lineup, this list served as the foundation for many early programming considerations.

The process of programming was hardly a spatially- or geographically-isolated undertaking. Even though the later stages of programming involved Lee’s conceptions of many other Bloomington-specific factors, the earlier stages of the booking process involved an acute perception of Bloomington as a point in a larger spatial network. Starting with performance showcases and industry-oriented conversations at the 2005 FolkAlliance/Strictly Mundial conference in Montreal, continuing into the tri-festival “world music summit” in Madison, and coming to a head when artists were finalizing tour itineraries that spanned a continent, participants’ senses of this broader network can be analyzed as somewhat analogous to the more localized sense of “festival geography” discussed in the previous chapter. “Centers” were re-established as the geographic center

of the country (the Midwest) was re-cast as peripheral to the coastal regions, which tended to attract the bulk of performers. The creation of intermediate points of newly-established significance served to reorient perceptions of proximity for touring artists. This larger sense of a “festival geography” continued to inflect Lee’s deliberations throughout the programming process. Even as his attention became more locally-oriented as the process progressed after the March “summit,” factors such as artist tour schedules and routing opportunities (or lack thereof) had a huge impact on Lee’s ability to bring certain artists to town and thus set the stage for the more Bloomington-specific programming criteria.

Artist Selection Criteria: Choosing Sounds

Although tri-festival communication regarding potential “shared” artists continued by phone and email after the “summit,” from April 2005 through the summer months Lee turned his attention to independent consideration of his own criteria for who should grace the stages of Bloomington. One of his primary overarching mandates had to do with the idea of “diversity,” conceived and manifested in a number of different ways. For example, it was partially his input that resulted in the classifications employed on the tri-festival wish-list, targeting diversity in terms of broad geographic area: Africa, Asia, South America, Europe, Middle East, Latin America, and Caribbean. He also included in this list a category—Celtic—that was not exactly geographic, *per se*, but pertained to a geographically-oriented characteristic musical sound, a sense of which was shared by all of the “summit” participants (further, Lee noted that there were simply too many self-identified “Celtic” artists touring to *not* give them their own category). For his own

purposes, Lee added to this a classification called “U.S.-Based”—artists who lived in the U.S. but whose performance genres articulated somehow with a non-U.S.-based musical style. This latter classification was logistically and financially significant because it represented less complicated access to “international” sounds. It was also distinct from Lee’s own consideration of U.S.-based artists who performed American music (bluegrass, blues, Cajun, etc.), included in the Lotus Festival’s sense of “diversity” but not typical of the offerings of world music festivals in general.

Lee quickly acknowledged that the list represented only one of many possible ways to classify artists and their music, and his subsequent deliberations about diversity definitely took into account the vast variety of musical styles that could be attributed to each of these geographic divisions. This initial wish-list thus belied his significantly more nuanced appreciation for sounds attributable to distinct ethnicities, regions, and performance contexts. He also strove for gender diversity (defined broadly as the representation of both men and women), to the extent that it was possible given the specific artists on tour in 2005, as well as sonic diversity vis-à-vis the representation of both “traditional” sounds (typically defined, by both Lee and consultant audience members, as acoustic, un-amplified music) and more “modern,” electrified, “mainstream,” or fusion efforts. Also under consideration were the characteristics of audience participation in a particular performance (i.e. a sit-down concert versus dance-oriented music), inclusion of both vocal and instrumental styles, and the notion of “per-day” diversity—giving participants the fullest-possible range of options on each festival day, rather than, for example, booking three Celtic bands and scheduling them all for the same evening.

In addition to regional, stylistic, or performer variety, the Lotus mobilization of “diversity” also embodied Lee’s rather more subjective perceptions of the quality and affect of potential festival artists. When asked about this layer of criteria, he first noted that he prided himself on bringing extremely high-quality artists to Bloomington—people who comparatively “rise above what other people are doing in the same field.” He also cited a rubric of three different types of “value” that he employed when considering any given artist: “entertainment value,” “educational value,” and “human value” (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Entertainment Value

Lee had a difficult time pinning down in words the exact concepts contained in his term “entertainment” (and even suggested that it wasn’t the right term at all), but he began by expressing it as having to do with “something about the performance that moves you in some way . . . something about the performance that keeps you there.” This could pertain to emotional, aesthetic, spiritual, or physical/kinesthetic affect, or several of these dimensions at once; the significant aspect(s) could have to do with the impact of things such as a performer’s costume or instrument, or a particular quality of sound or voice. Later in the interview, Lee kept coming back to the notion of aesthetics, but noted that “aesthetics are really only one part of it” and cited more diffuse aspects such as an artist’s “energy” or “charisma.” Overall, he admitted relying on several decades of experience as a “talent buyer” for a very specific market (Bloomington) in order to recognize whatever that unique quality may be, and he noted that his instincts in

that regard usually let him know within minutes whether has particular group has that “entertainment value” or not (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Educational Value

Lee put “educational value” on a par with “entertainment value” in terms of its relative weight and importance in the booking process, and he equated the notion of “educational” rather closely with Lotus’s operational definition of “diversity.” As he explained it, even if a group or artist didn’t have that outstanding “entertainment” component, they could still be attractive to Lotus on the basis of their “representational value”—if they represented a culture, region, style, gender emphasis, or other component (such as a particular instrument) that had either not been featured at the festival before or recently, or was not well-represented in a given year’s line-up. Lee stressed the role of Lotus in introducing people to new experiences and felt that expressions of the *context* of the music were more important at performances by these “educational” artists (as opposed to the performances chosen primarily for their “entertainment” value), whether provided by the artist (depending on their English language skills), a translator, or the venue emcee (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Human Value

Lee’s notion of “human value” had less to do with musical quality and far more to do with artists as individuals who would have to interact with festival staff, volunteers, and audiences. Here he employed his extensive personal network of friends, music presenters, and festival producers to get a sense of a given artist’s personal reputation and

how he or she had acted in other similar (festival) environments. Were they easy to deal with? Did they ask for too much special treatment? Did they have a confrontation with a volunteer, sound engineer, stage manager, or other participant with whom they came in contact? Or, to put it another way, Lee summed up his position by quoting a California-based presenter who once said that “we’ll book great artists once and great people twice.” While he acknowledged that some situations might certainly have been the fault of someone other than the artists, he also felt that multiple reports of negative incidents were usually attributable to that performer and could negatively impact his final booking decision (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Venue-Appropriate Artists: The Role of Venues in Programming

The choice of which artists to bring to Lotus in 2005 resided in a number of dimensions—discussed thus far have been a temporal-geographic dimension, encompassing artist tour schedule and availability; aesthetic and representational dimensions corresponding to Lee’s notions of “entertainment” and “educational” value; and a discursive/metacultural dimension that embraced both the way specific artists were put on display and promoted via “showcases” at international conferences, and the circulation of information among the network of presenters (per Lee’s calculation of “human” value). There was also a distinctly *spatial* dimension to programming deliberations. Venue selection was a crucial part of programming, and it evolved not only from local considerations of available spaces, but also worked hand-in-hand with artist selection, especially vis-à-vis Lee’s evaluation of the “venue-appropriateness” of particular artists.

Even during the showcases at the Montreal conference, Lee was considering venues as part of his artist selection criteria and noted that part of the visioning and programming process was “picturing artists on one of your stages” and “tailoring certain artists to certain venues” (Lee Williams, personal interview). Even though Lee considered many possible venues, he was also very aware that his options were not unlimited, especially within his ideal festival geography, and as such he definitely pictured artists against his conceptions of particular affective qualities of the various spaces and stages available to him in Bloomington. For example, he felt that “vocal music is good in the church,” whereas louder dance bands might fit better on one of the outdoor street stages; he also considered factors such as need to build extra staging to accommodate certain groups, the capacity of venues vis-à-vis the potential “draw” of an artist, or how a band with a large amount of backline or amplification might fare in relationship to the acoustics of a particular space (Lee Williams, personal interview).

A significant factor in Lee’s decision-making process was his strategy of periodically [sketching out potential schedules on venue grids](#)—he mapped out the possible venues and then tried to insert possible artists from his long list of options. These initial sketches served as a model to help him visualize the overall direction of the festival and the way he was thinking about each venue space vis-à-vis artist characteristics. For example, early in the 2005 programming, one such sketch showed him that he was focusing, aesthetically, on larger groups, but that he had no place to put them, since three of his venues were tentatively churches that could most effectively accommodate solo or duo performances. This resulted in a change in programming direction. These periodic sketches, juxtaposing artist and venue options, had a significant

impact on who Lee chose to invite to Lotus—he admitted that he might reject an artist he really loved, in order to find someone more appropriate for the needs he saw based on these “maps.”

These considerations of “venue-appropriate” artists, however, were dependent on the initial step of considering the appropriateness of the venues themselves. While “artist-appropriateness” was definitely one factor, there were many other criteria that Lee mobilized in course of venue selection. The next section of this study will discuss these various criteria for choosing performance spaces, presenting both the overarching general factors as well as the evaluations of past events that impacted on the venue-oriented decisions new to 2005. Descriptions of criteria will be supplemented with my own more theoretically-oriented analysis of the different types of spatial affect considered by Lee and other agents of festival production. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a focus on a specific type of Lotus venue—the churches—and the ways in which the principles of juxtaposition functioned to create the unique affective properties of these spaces during the festival.

Venue Selection Criteria: Choosing Spaces

The factors Lee considered when choosing venues seemed to be situated along a continuum that ranged from the very concrete and pragmatically-oriented, to more abstract or less-tangible perceptions of “vibe” or other affective characteristics of a given space. In terms of the more practical side of things, he cited one of the most important venue selection criteria as “physical geography,” commenting that “if you had the world’s greatest venue a mile away, we couldn’t use it!” (Lee Williams, personal

interview). This relates directly to the discussion in the previous chapter about festival geography and the role of distance/proximity in creating a sense of “festival” space. For Lee, the operative measure was that of “walking distance,” which he considered to be about four blocks from the festival “center” of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. In past years, he had tried to use venues that were further away, but he received a great deal of negative feedback—especially about spaces on the IU campus such as the IU Auditorium or Alumni Hall (located in the Indiana Memorial Union) that were deemed “too far” by festival attendees. Physical geography was also a consideration in the 2005 decision to stop using the Convention Center as a venue, because its distance from the designated “center” generated many opinions that it was “too much of a haul” and that walking there resulted in the loss of precious time that could have been spent hearing music.

Some other criteria could potentially have overridden the consideration of proximity, however, such as the cost and capacity considerations that came next on Lee’s list of limiting factors. For example, in 2003 the use of the IU Auditorium as a venue was based on the fact that the Auditorium was sponsoring the performance there; as such, proximity temporarily took a back seat to the huge volume of the Auditorium and the fact that its use would come at minimal cost to Lotus. That aside, though, cost and capacity were significant considerations. Lee has to think about the rental expense relative to the size of the venue (and if ticket revenue will sustain its use), as well as capacity vis-à-vis the projected audience for any given artist. He noted that Lotus has “outgrown” at least three different venues since its inception and that, at its present stage of development, any venue with fewer than 200 seats was too small to use. Capacity was additionally a factor vis-à-vis the reduction of ever-unpopular long lines of people waiting to enter a venue.

Finally, capacity was also a primary motivation for the development of the “outdoor street stage” concept for 2005, a venue model that promised to offer a huge increase in potential capacity and revenue with a correspondingly low financial commitment (even with the need to rent and retain emergency rain sites) and even the ability to eliminate the rental of one or more other venue spaces without loss in the total audience volume.

Other practical considerations for venue selection included age restrictions and staging issues. Lotus has typically utilized at least one bar or nightclub as a performance venue; however, these spaces limited entry to people over the age of 21. Lee had been willing to use one bar each year, in spite of the criticism it usually generated, but he was wary of the risk of making more than one venue inaccessible to families, children, or younger audience members. Also, the presence or lack of existing staging at a potential venue was an important concern, in terms of whether or not Lotus would have to build a stage or stage extension. The consideration of staging issues also took into account the assessment of acoustics, seating, and the relative quality and flexibility of sound and lighting systems.

Entry and Exit: Movement Between Venues

After issues such as location, cost, capacity, and staging were factored in, the selection criteria for venues took a turn into more subjective issues that were rooted in a peculiarly local festival model and a sense of “Lotus culture” that had evolved and emerged over the last 12 years. One aspect of this “Lotus culture” was the way in which audience members have chosen to experience the plethora of simultaneous musical offerings. The typical festival program has tended to place performances in direct

“competition” with each other, so that audience members must make some decisions about how to attend everything they are interested in seeing. While some participants may opt to see one performance per schedule block and remain in a venue for the entire duration of the performance, most participants have usually chosen to “sample” the offerings by moving between venues and attending multiple performances in one schedule block.

The format of the Lotus Festival has always encouraged what staff members call this “voyage of discovery,” but as the festival and audience population grew, the result was that the majority of attendees transitioned during sets rather than staying for whole performances. Not only did this result in movement between venues that necessitated quick transitions and street-crossings (hence touching on some of the proximity and safety issues discussed in Chapter 3 and earlier in this chapter), but it also resulted in many people entering and exiting venues during performances. Even though audience members have been instructed, via program booklets and stage announcements, to only enter and exit between songs, there has remained mass movement throughout festival sets. While admitting that this is “a culture we’ve created” (LuAnne Holladay, meeting remarks), Lotus staff members have become increasingly concerned about the negative feedback they’ve received from artists and audience members about this practice—many artists felt insulted when people left mid-set (even though advance materials warn them to expect it), and that many audience members were embarrassed on their behalf.

The practice of mass entry and exit has also had spatial ramifications for venue selection. On a practical level, venues must be evaluated on how many entrances and exits are part of the structure. There must be at least two points available that can be

separately designated, one for entry and one for exit, in order to avoid traffic jams and create a smooth and rapid audience flow. For example, Lee cited the use of the Monroe County Public Library's auditorium space as a past Lotus venue, and the library's refusal to allow use of the emergency exit as a point for audience egress. When everyone had to enter and exit through the same door, there wasn't enough time to get everyone out, in, and re-seated during the short break between songs; this disrupted performances and eventually led to the rejection of the MCPL auditorium as a Lotus venue.

This example speaks to the other primary spatial concern vis-à-vis entry and exit, which is the placement of doors. Even if there were at least two doors, their location was a crucial factor in calculating the degree to which movement through those doors would disrupt activity on stage. Typically, doors on opposite ends of a room have provided the least disruption because there was one-way traffic through the space; however, Lee must also consider if people would have to cross *in front of the stage* to access these doors. This became a central issue in the 2005 decision to reject the John Waldron Arts Center as a venue space, despite the location's historic role as one of the first Lotus Festival venues, its present role as the "home of the arts" in Bloomington (it houses the Bloomington Area Arts Council), and its continuous use as a venue since the festival's inception. The flow of traffic through the Waldron auditorium took people directly in front of the stage and put the artists closer to audience entry/exit than at any other Lotus venue. As the festival grew, there came to be crowds of more than 30-40 people crossing in front of the stage during every song break. Artists complained, both privately to Lee and publicly from the stage. This issue (combined with bleed-over into artist monitors from the radio station next-door, a completely separate problem) resulted in a 2005 shift

to using the Waldron exclusively for non-musical festival purposes such as Artist Hospitality areas and Volunteer Headquarters.

Spatial Diversity: Venues and “Vibe”

More than one festival attendee commented on the diversity of possible experiences within the festival, not only in terms of different types of music from different places and the sonically-oriented movement from culture to culture, but also in terms of movement from venue to venue and the variety of possible spatial affects. This type of spatial diversity was intentionally constructed by Lee and other festival producers, as illustrated in an April e-mail message that circulated during a committee debate about venue selection:

The festival is an experience for attendees because of many factors. Two of the most important . . . are the artists and the venues. People have their favorite venues . . . just like their favorite music. Giving people the opportunity to visit a variety of venues adds to the diversity of experience. So, is 3 of any venue too much, 3 churches, 3 street stages, 3 nightclubs? Should we consider a venue that would normally be rejected (like a tent for \$ or the library for size) so people can have that experience? (Lee Williams, email communication)

The notion of venue “diversity” had multiple components. Some were more objective, such as whether a performance site was indoors or outdoors, or whether it was better-suited for dancing or for seated participation. Other components were more subjective, such as what kind of “vibe” or emotional affect was possible within a given space.

According to Lee and members of the Lotus Board, a “lively indoor/outdoor mix” has long been an objective of the festival model, and continues to be a part of LEAF’s strategic long-range planning. The desire to preserve some degree of “indoor” character was also one of the primary reasons why the festival had never been moved to a field or

fairgrounds. The tents were a popular addition in the early years of the festival, after Lotus got city permission to shut down streets. Lee noted that this early success of the tents was critical to popular vibe of the festival:

You'd be in a venue which is accustomed to music, and then you'd walk out into the street and there's music in the street also. This made it seem like music was everywhere, you couldn't escape it and that was what you wanted . . . everything was feeding off the energy of the music from around the world. (Lee Williams, personal interview)

This sense of music “everywhere” was largely an effect of the ambiguous nature of the tent structures, which as noted in Chapter 3 were both indoor and outdoor at the same time, with no impediment to the travel of sound. A festival volunteer once commented, in the context of a discussion about laying dance flooring in tents, that the tents created a “feeling” of “in”-ness by having a roof, and so there was a sense of also needing a floor other than the asphalt (a distinctly “outdoor” substance; Richard Shepherd, meeting remarks). In another conversation about the tents, a long-time festival attendee talked about the ephemeral effect of having a cloth ceiling and open-air “walls” that accentuated the feeling of being outdoors, even while there was simultaneously a powerful feeling of “belonging” that occurred among the people who got to be “inside” the structure. This ambiguity was also clearly illustrated by the “freebie” problem introduced in Chapter 3, where people who were “outside” could have as favorable a vantage point on a performance as those who were “inside.” Further, in terms of paying vs. non-paying participants, Lotus distinctly defined the tent spaces as “inside”—exclusive spaces which only people with wristbands could physically enter.



Figure 4.1: Ruben Rodriguez and his band soundcheck in the Monroe Bank Tent, 2004. (Photo by LuAnne Holladay)

From this standpoint, then, in spite of the emphasis on a mix of indoor and outdoor venues it would seem that up through 2004 there had never been any truly “outdoor” venues at the Lotus Festival—the perception of an “indoor/outdoor” mix seemed to stem directly from the ambiguities associated with the tent structures. The spatial liminality of the tents was undeniable, and the popularity of these ambiguous spaces suggests that the *physical* parameters of liminality were just as important for analysis of “festival-ness” as were the examples of social and behavioral liminality that more commonly crop up in the literature. As such, the 2005 decision to do away with the tents necessarily affected the overall sense of “festival” at Lotus; this issue will

predominate in the discussion in Chapter 5 about new types of ambiguity and liminality that were constructed via the development of the outdoor street stages.

The notion of being indoors, whether ambiguously as in the tents or concretely as in theaters, churches, and other buildings, also contributed to another oft-cited and popular characteristic of Lotus venues—a sense of physical closeness and emotional intimacy. Even though Lee and many other festival attendees made a clear distinction between huge venues such as the Convention Center and the Buskirk-Chumley Theater and smaller venues such as the churches, the Waldron, the bars/nightclubs, and the tents, they all described a predominant vibe of “smallness” when they talked about their overall experience at the festival. Lee once noted that

. . . the performances are in venues where you feel very close . . . like you could sit in your living room with these people. There is a sense of smallness and seeing people’s faces, and this smallness of the venues increases the excitement. The artists are also human and realize the importance of emotional reaction and feedback from the audience . . . the audience is on top of you, to a certain extent, and this is immediate and artistically ideal...they give performances of an emotional quality that they maybe wouldn’t give everywhere. (Lee Williams, personal interview)

Other festival-goers also spoke to me about feeling an “individual bond with the artist” in the smaller Lotus venues (Danise Alano, personal interview).

Yi-Fu Tuan discusses the experience of intimacy and the ways in which the built environment heightens and accentuates the difference between “inside” and “outside” and, correspondingly, the oppositional emotional affects of intimacy/exposure and private/public. He also goes on to describe the way in which goals and activity can promote certain evaluations of closeness in “inside” spaces—shared activities and goals can engender a sense of camaraderie, while conflicting goals and activities can engender a sense of “crowding” and frustration (Tuan 1977:64, 107). This theoretical perspective

yields interesting results when applied to the issue of venue spaces and spatial affect at Lotus. It can be argued that the sense of “intimacy” that prevailed as the characteristic affect of the Lotus Festival as a whole stemmed from the intentional use of exclusively ticket-only “indoor” venues where walls and ceilings (or the suggestion thereof) accentuated a feeling of shelter, safety, and privacy, separate and distinct from outdoor areas and external distractions. As illustrated by Lee’s comment about feeling like you could “sit in your living room” with the performers, this sense of enclosure engendered feelings of emotional, almost *domestic* closeness and intimacy. The shared act of entering an exclusive, ticket-only area immediately created connection and “othered” those outside; as such, audience members became related and familial. Though the spaces were full of people, the affect was one of support and *communitas* that created a feeling of deep intimacy and a level of engagement that was simultaneously (and indistinguishably) personal and communal.

Even in huge venues such as the Convention Center and Buskirk-Chumley Theater, people remembered a feeling of closeness; the dancing, pressing throng of bodies was recalled in positive terms of “excitement” rather than negative terms like “crowding.” In the case of the participant who earlier noted the sense of “belonging” that accompanied entry to the tent structure, it can be argued that the basic frame and roof of the tent accentuated a sense of “inside” that made movement into the space a movement out of exposure and into an intimate, familial environment that “othered” the people who were not involved—in spite of the fact that the open air and those bystanders were just feet away. It can be argued that this prevailing sense of “smallness,” even in large or open-air venue spaces, was another example of spatial ambiguity that contributed to a

festival affect—the built distinction between indoor and outdoor was strongly emphasized, via architecture and ticket-only access, in a way that negated distinctions between small and large and engendered a sense of privacy and domesticity in spaces that were clearly public and non-domestic.

However, this perception of shared activity could also have had ramifications that re-introduced the negative affect of “crowding.” Many, many people attended the Lotus Festival with the intent to dance; this tendency is well-known to producers who used appropriateness for dancing as one criterion for venue selection, seeking a balance between “dancing” and “sit-down” venues within the spatial diversity of the festival. These different types of kinesthetic engagement with performance, however, were rarely mutually exclusive and confined to separate venues, and they did not always peacefully co-exist within the same spaces. Many times, people who were seated resented the dancers for blocking their view (or, as my companion at the 2004 festival commented, she “got tired of staring at peoples’ asses”); dancers resented the chairs that took up valuable space that could otherwise have been used for moving around. The co-existence of conflicting activities and goals in these situations created a feeling of constraint rather than intimacy in the small, indoor spaces—of crowding rather than *communitas*. In my interviews and casual chats with festival attendees, this sense of contested space and conflict between dancers and seated audience members arose almost as frequently as the positive festival vibe of intimacy and closeness with performers. Lee Williams was highly aware of this, and the development of the outdoor street stages for 2005 was partly an attempt to resolve the tension by creating open spaces *without* chairs and thus clearly designated for dancing.

Prior Use and the Role of Association

One final criterion for venue selection, according to Lee, was the consideration of whether the space had been previously used as a music performance venue, or if it was “just a room.” He noted that he preferred spaces that had been performance venues, because people were comfortable and “accustomed” to seeing music there and had positive experiences and associations with music in that space. He gave the Convention Center as an example of a poor venue in this regard, and he felt that its ordinarily non-musical uses contributed to its unpopularity as a performance space (Lee Williams, personal interview).

This notion of past use is an intriguing idea that is highly relevant to the present study. Application of a phenomenological perspective makes this a little easier to appreciate, and the basics can be summed up in a review of the work of Alfred Schutz and his concepts of “passive synthesis” and the role of recollection. For Schutz, “passive synthesis” is a process by which the mind creates monothetic shortcuts to identify the meaning of a “familiar” experience. This process, also known as the formation of “typifications,” is not actually “passive,” per se; rather, it gives the illusion of passivity:

What we call “familiarity” is the striking experience of the familiar things, that they were somewhat pre-experienced in successive activities of our mind. In looking at them again I do not start again to re-perform all of the polythetic steps by which I built them up at the first time; I grasp the field monothetically by one single ray. (Schutz 1976:55)

This idea of creating mental shortcuts for understanding meaning is closely tied in with Schutz’s notions about recollection as essential to how meaning is constructed in the present. To explain, he uses the terms “reproductions,” “retentions,” “protentions,” and

“anticipations” – the former two terms refer to remembrances of events in the distant past and immediate past, respectively, and the latter two terms refer to expectations for the immediate future and more distant future, respectively. In Schutz’s view, creating meaning is a constant process of anticipating future events based on remembrances of past experiences, and constantly updating the criteria for anticipation as the “now” either confirms or proves false the anticipation and that “now” becomes recollection. In combination with the idea of typifications and shortcuts for creating those anticipations, this principle of meaning via recollections is characterized in the overall concept of “frames of reference,” or the notion that previous experience provides a base of knowledge to which a subject refers his/her actual experience and from which s/he derives present meaning (Schutz 1976:41, 45).

Lee’s preference for venues that had previously been spaces for musical performance was one example of these principles in action. Recollections of performances in those spaces would tend to make a listener more comfortable and appropriately receptive to present musical meaning; prior experience, familiarity, and “cues” (to use another Schutzian concept) would also provide a frame of reference for appropriate behaviors in that space that correspond to attendance at a concert—for example, cues such as a raised stage, chairs in particular formations, or the presence of microphones might invoke a frame where the expected behaviors were attentive listening, applause, or sitting or standing in the space for an extended period of time. It is in these types of spaces, however, where protentions and anticipations might conflict and cause tension with actual, Lotus-specific behaviors. For example, the practice of exiting and entering during a performance is antithetical to “normal” behavior at a concert; even

though performers knew to expect this behavior and other audience members might themselves be preparing to leave momentarily, the experience of mass movement in a “musical concert” frame of reference doesn’t fit with pretensions and might invoke immediate reactions of insult or embarrassment.

In spaces not typically used for musical performance, Lotus staff has generally asked for the construction of elements that would hopefully cue similar behavior, such as staging, sound systems, lighting, and seating arrangements. This has had several possible outcomes, as illustrated by two types of Lotus Festival experience. First, to analyze Lee’s example, in a space like the Convention Center, which is pre-existing but is defined by a vast range of possible activities therein, sometimes this construction was not enough to engage the appropriate frame of reference; the result was an uncertainty or experiential confusion that left the participant vaguely uncomfortable and unsure how to attend to meaning. In the second type of experience, though, there were venue spaces such as the churches which had very well-defined everyday uses and thus invoked very distinct referents for meaning. When Lotus constructed new elements in these spaces, there arose multiple object and spatial cues that operated to engage several simultaneous frames of reference, resulting in the rich spatial liminality that is the subject of this dissertation.

Churches as Lotus Venues: Sacred Spaces

One of my consultants commented that the diversity of venue experiences was just as important as musical diversity in her appreciation of the Lotus Festival and factored heavily into the “diversity of experiences you can have within an hour at the

Lotus festival.” In particular, she, like many others, cited the church spaces as sites of distinct and significant affect, especially in comparison to other types of Lotus venues:

In the tents, people are dancing, and it’s much more of a “typical” festival, while in the churches you sort of tiptoe in . . . you don’t enter until a song ends, and there is this sense of reverence and an air of respect, and you can get your head into the music a little bit more . . . they sound so great in there, and there becomes such an individual bond with the artist. (Danise Alano, personal interview)

The Lotus Festival had typically utilized at least one downtown church as a performance venue, and in 2004 they used two churches: the First Christian Church (located at the corner of Kirkwood and Washington), and the First United Methodist Church (located at the corner of Washington and 4th St.).

This section will draw from interviews with festival attendees, personnel from these two churches, and Lee Williams to discuss issues related to the use of churches as Lotus venues. The section will begin with a brief history of how these churches came to be used as Lotus venues, and how Lee and the church administrations perceived the process of programming artists to perform in the church spaces. The discussion will then shift into a description of what seemed to be a shared sense of a particular “vibe” or mood in these spaces that was very different from other venues. Finally, the conclusion of this section will delve into a theoretical analysis of the relationship between this vibe and the physico-spatial characteristics of the church space, focusing on how festival practices constructed spatial ambiguity in these venues—a liminal suspension via the juxtaposition of sacred and secular elements that affected how participants experienced those venues.



Figure 4.2: The First Christian Church. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

Negotiating the Church as Venue

For both the First Christian and the First United Methodist Churches, the initial choice to partner with Lotus was facilitated by personal connections between church personnel and Lee Williams. In the case of the First United Methodist (first used as a Lotus venue in 1998), the key liaison was church parishioner Karin St. John who had worked with Lee years earlier on a short-lived annual Bloomington music event called HoosierFest.⁴ When Lee became interested in using the church as a venue, due to its

⁴ HoosierFest began in the late 1980s, with the goal of drawing people back to downtown Bloomington. According to Karin, it was an effort by the Commission for Downtown Bloomington, with funding from local corporate giant Cook, to counter a perceived decline in the downtown area that was exacerbated by (Footnote continued on next page)

downtown location and 600-person capacity, he requested Karin's help in approaching the church administration; the two eventually met together with church officials to discuss the idea. A similar scenario unfolded in the case of the First Christian Church (first used as a Lotus venue in 2002). Lee had first approached the church several years prior, but the pastor at the time was not receptive; Lee was still very interested in the centrally-located facility, however, and in 2002 Lee sought the help of Tina Jernigan, who had worked as a Lotus volunteer and knew Lee and LuAnne from her period of employment at the John Waldron Arts Center. Tina was part of the administrative staff at the First Christian Church, and the church had just hired a new pastor; Tina helped to set up a meeting, and she also offered an endorsement of Lee and Lotus to the new minister, who at the time was unfamiliar with the event.

Interviews with Karin and Tina revealed that these initial three-way conversations (among Lee, liaison, and church administration) were extremely similar at both churches, in terms of the negotiation of how church space could and should be used by Lotus. At the First Christian Church, most of the church's concerns had to do with security issues involving certain spaces—for example, it was agreed that Lotus audience members should not be allowed to access the balcony (where the church organ was housed) or the upstairs portion of the building, and that food and beverages were not allowed in the church where spills could damage carpets, walls, woodwork and artwork, etc. The First United Methodist Church administrators had similar concerns about preserving physical church space, in terms of access and food/drink, and it was clear that use of the church *as a church* took precedence over any use Lotus might propose. Physical changes to the

the construction of College Mall out on the east side of town. The event petered out in the early 1990s (Karin St. John, personal interview).

space (i.e., building extra staging, hanging banners, reorganizing altar areas to accommodate technical equipment, removing communion kneelers, etc.) had to be removed or remedied in time for Sunday morning services, and all clean-up had to be complete. Further, there have been several weddings scheduled at the First United Methodist that have taken priority over Lotus activities—one year, the church refused its



Figure 4.3: The First United Methodist Church. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

use as a Lotus venue because of a previously-scheduled wedding, and in 2004 a wedding was scheduled on the Saturday morning of the festival. Karin recalled that Lotus volunteers were required to set everything up on Friday for the festival, take everything down on Friday night and “turn it back into a church,” re-set the church as a Lotus venue on Saturday afternoon, and then take everything down again on Saturday night so that the church was back to normal for Sunday morning. Similarly, at the First Christian Church, Tina noted that Lee had approached the church to use the facility for Lotus activities in the earlier part of the festival week (for Wednesday or Thursday festival events), but that the church denied the request because of the schedule for choir practice.

At both churches, and especially at the First United Methodist, administrators also proposed conditions about the type of music to be programmed in the church during Lotus. Karin remembered that they were concerned about preserving not only physical church space but also about preserving “our sacred space,” and this was manifested in concerns about the things that should or should not be said in the church, as well as what Karin called the “interface” with traditional Christian music. While no one at either church expected that Lotus would program religious music or music that actively supported the church’s doctrine, there was a preference expressed for music that avoided profanity or sexually-explicit lyrics, or anything that was explicitly counter to the church’s religious and spiritual message (i.e. nothing “anti-Christian”). Sonically, representatives from both churches felt that neither building had the electrical capacity, acoustics, or sound system to support large, loud, electrified bands

Interestingly enough, neither set of church officials mentioned anything about the appropriateness of dancing in the church space. As will be explored in the next section,

exactly *why* this is interesting has to do with the fact that, in spite of there being no prohibition on dance, most audience members did not dance in the church spaces. Tina and Karin both expressed their feelings that the presence of permanent pews makes dancing in the church difficult, and both women seemed to feel that Lee intentionally avoids putting “dance-able music” there. However, evidence from past festival suggests that this latter assumption was more of a perception than a reality. For example, at the 2004 festival, performers such as Samite and Le Vent du Nord played to completely seated audiences at the churches but both artists drew huge crowds of dancers when they had sets at non-church venues. The popular group Väsen sported a repertoire that was comprised almost exclusively of musical forms that are unequivocally dance genres (waltzes and *polskas*), and yet they, too, played to seated houses in the churches. Since these examples illustrate that the programming was not actually anti-dance, perhaps there was something about the church spaces themselves that contributed to this and other types of unique affect in these venues.

Affect of Church Space: Constructing Liminality

Lee’s perceptions of “church-appropriate artists” largely jibed with those of the church administrations (although it is hard to say to what extent and in what direction there might be a cause-effect relationship there). As noted earlier, when Lee sketched out grids which matched artists to Bloomington venues, he was definitely mobilizing a sense of who was “church-appropriate.” While his choices tended to respect the lyric-theme preferences of church administrators, he also considered other elements. Certain considerations were exclusively spatial and included the limitations of constructing

staging, with stage extensions built onto the altars themselves, which could only accommodate smaller groups. The churches also have permanent pews and, as such, lent themselves to performances that could have sit-down appeal. However, Lee also programmed on the basis of a certain “vibe” that producers felt existed in the churches. Such considerations were more subjective and included his desire, for example, to program the churches as “quieter” spaces. He expressed to me a preference for acoustic and especially vocal music in the churches, and for either solo acts or groups of no more than two or three people—for example, he recounted past successes with booking African American women singers in church spaces, such as Odetta, Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir, and Bernice and Toshi Reagon. He also programmed the churches according to the expected audience draw of a particular artist, striving for a balance between “high appeal” and “church appropriate” in the case of the larger churches, or for smaller-draw artists in the smaller churches. Lee noted that many of the artists he booked for their “educational value” (as described earlier in this chapter) tended to end up in the churches, suggesting the expectation of a more intellectual experience in those spaces.

This sense of a peculiarly “church vibe” arose frequently in my conversations with festival producers and other consultants. Karin noted that people seem to behave very differently in church spaces than in other types of venues, commenting that “they clap and are like a regular audience, they’re not necessarily quiet, but they all, I think, feel a sense of what’s going on and are kind of in awe” (Karin St. John, personal interview). Tina felt that people seemed more “quiet” when they enter the space, more “respectful and subdued,” and she contrasted this to the atmosphere in the Buskirk-Chumley Theater or the Convention Center where she had observed a more “crazy, free,

and loose” atmosphere (Tina Jernigan, personal interview). One of my companions at the 2004 festival loved to dance at Lotus, and during Le Vent du Nord’s performance at the First United Methodist she stood behind the pew for that purpose; however, she sat down after one song saying that “it feels odd to be dancing here” and complained later that the church didn’t seem like a good venue for that group because their “energy” and “danceability” were compromised somewhat by the church setting. More than one consultant also noted this lack of dancing in the church spaces—one emcee commented that “even though people always dance in the aisles at Lotus, they never do it in the churches” (Jessica Anderson-Turner, personal interview). Other consultants described feelings of these venues being “hallowed spaces” in which performances had a “spiritual” quality, a heightened sense of intellectualism in the church spaces (“you can get your head into the music a little bit more” [Danise Alano, personal interview]), of increased “reverence” and an “air of respect,” as well as an increased sense of intimacy and the ability to have a more “individual bond with the artist” in those venues. While some consultants relished the mellower, subdued mood in the church spaces, others ascribed a more negative interpretation to the church affect; for example, during a production meeting one high-level volunteer complained about the 2005 plan to use three churches because having too many churches “really brings the mood down.”

Lotus artists have even commented on the church vibe from the festival stages. In their respective 2004 appearances at the First United Methodist Church, a Väsen member commented on the feeling of an “expectation to talk in a certain voice” in the church, and one of the musicians in Le Vent du Nord introduced an upcoming tune by explaining that “this is an appropriate place for a slow song.” The Ugandan musician Samite,

performing in 2004 in the First Christian Church, was frustrated by his seated audience and admonished them from the stage that “*this is a church, but you are allowed to move.*” (Audience members at this performance noted that almost *nobody* took him up on this invitation, in sharp contrast to a similar invitation in the Monroe Bank Tent earlier in the evening that resulted in the entire crowd getting up to dance.) Samite had also earlier commented to his audience about how excited he was to be able to perform in the “sacred space” of the church and how much he liked the “airiness,” the acoustics, and the ways “different spaces create different performances.”

Overall, Lee and festival producers and festival participants, in formal interviews and casual conversational encounters, consistently provided descriptions of festival experiences in church spaces that were remarkably consistent in content and even in the specific linguistic terms employed (i.e. “reverence,” “subdued,” “intimate,” “mellow”). They all described a certain “feeling” in the churches, strong opinions about appropriate and inappropriate behavior in these venues, and vivid contrasts to other types of Lotus venues. So how was this affect produced? The Lotus Festival was overtly non-religious in character or intent; as noted earlier, the same bands performing in other venues played to entirely different types of mood and reception. Emcees did not give instructions on “appropriate” behavior in the church, and yet audience behavior was perceived to be amazingly consistent throughout the evenings and in all of the churches. Artists, such as Samite described above, have even been known to specifically instruct people to dance, and these requests were most often specifically ignored by the majority of attendees. I would like to argue here that this peculiar “vibe” in the church venues was a product of the *space* itself (and culturally-learned behaviors cued by it; see Schutz 1976), and that

the juxtaposition of “Lotus” onto church space resulted in a constructed spatial ambiguity that enabled a uniquely “festival” affect that was neither entirely sacred nor entirely secular/profane.

In their book *Public Space and Democracy*, Marcel Hénaff and Tracy Strong define “sacred space” as space that is not only reserved for a god (or gods) but is considered to quite literally *be* the presence of the god (Hénaff and Strong 2001:3). Yi-Fu Tuan takes a slightly different view, focusing on the architectural devices which enclose or concretize sacred space, noting that “manmade space can refine human feeling and perception.”

The built environment clarifies social roles and relations. People know better who they are and how they ought to behave when the arena is humanly designed . . . The vertical structure of the [cosmos] was not then an abstract and dry doctrine that had to be accepted on faith but rather a world that could be seen and felt as the arches and towers heaved heavenward. (Tuan 1977:102,106)

He goes on to be more specific, noting that architecture not only clarifies but actually instructs:

. . . a cathedral instructs on several levels. There is the direct appeal to the senses, to feeling and the subconscious mind. The building’s centrality and commanding presence are immediately registered. Here is mass—the weight of stone and authority—and yet the towers soar. These are not self-conscious and retrospective interpretations; they are responses of the body. Inside . . . there is the level of explicit teaching. Pictures in the stained-glass windows are texts . . . There are the countless signs pointing to Christian doctrine, practice, and mystery: holy water, flickering candle light, statues of saints, confessional, pulpit, altar, and cross are examples. To some of the signs the worshipers respond with a more or less automatic act, such as kneeling. Other signs elicit specific ideas. The cross suggests suffering, atonement, and salvation. Finally the cathedral as a whole and in its details is a symbol of paradise...a man [who enters] is reverent and has some learning; he knows about God and heaven . . . These are, however, only words . . . but in the cathedral . . . the

beauty of space and light that he can perceive enables him to apprehend effortlessly another and far greater glory. (Tuan 1977:114-16)⁵

Philosopher Henri Lefebvre also engages discussion of the role of cathedral architecture in the production of authority/power (in terms of both god and the hegemony of the church) and illumination (in the sense of being both instructive and literally luminous) via the notion of a unifying visual logic that produces both a physical and a mental/social space (Lefebvre 1991:258-261).

From these three theoretical perspectives, we can identify several common ideas that are helpful in considering how churches functioned as Lotus venues. First, there is agreement on church or sacred space as *agentive* rather than just symbolic—these spaces not only suggest, but *do* something, whether by actually being embodiments of the divine or by evoking certain visceral, corporeal reactions. Second, there is the notion that the symbolism in these arenas is also powerful, as architectural and ceremonial devices reference historical or religious texts, put the viewer in certain types of relationship to height and light, or emphasize religious, political, or social paradigms. Finally and in a more general sense, all of these theories posit churches and cathedrals as spaces that are affectively distinct from non-church space; further, they all posit spatial characteristics (as opposed to the verbal, etc.) as the primary means by which these structures affectively distinguish themselves.

⁵ This is obviously a distinctly Judeo-Christian viewpoint on the relationship between god and man, and the built environment of sacred spaces in other cultures or religious paradigms would likely use different architectural or symbolic devices. Aside from this, it is worth noting that Tuan's emphasis on symbolism is not incompatible with Schutz's ideas about familiarity—the indexing of certain behaviors to specific symbolic cues can be construed as a parallel process to the experience of meaning via frames of reference (Schutz 1976, Tuan 1977).

When Lotus adopted churches like the First United Methodist and the First Christian as venues, they took steps to transform the sanctuaries into spaces suitable for presenting musical performance. Significantly, however, they did not completely erase or remove the aforementioned elements that defined these structures, spatially, as churches. (In fact, Lotus producers often opted to intentionally leave some of these elements as already relevant to the experience they would like to construct for audience members, for example pews to provide seating or the raised altar area as a stage with good sightlines.) The resultant juxtaposition of “Lotus” onto church sanctuary produced ambiguous space—a physical environment altered for festival use in a way that created tension with the existing building.

Even the most casual observation illustrates how secular Lotus performances cohabited spaces that clearly index religiosity. For example, LuAnne Holladay notes in *Bringing the World to Our Neighborhood* that “houses of worship become concert halls, with stages and sound systems that somehow don’t diminish the gentle gravity of polished wood and altar cloths” (Holladay 2005:127). Bibles and hymnals remained in the pews (although Karin noted that she removed these in the first year Lotus used the First United Methodist, since she wasn’t sure if audiences would maltreat them. She has since opted to leave them in place). Altar areas were used as stages; even though extensions were sometimes constructed, items like communion tables were rarely moved and became a backdrop to microphones, speakers, and coiled piles of cable. While Lotus might have hung a banner from a balcony railing, church religious iconography was typically not taken down or blocked from view—artists performed under large altar crosses/crucifixes and beside candles or embroidered altar cloths, pulpits were moved



Figure 4.4: Performing on the altar at the First Christian Church during Lotus Festival 2005.
(Photo by Matthew Sieber)

aside but not removed, and stained glass images were prominently visible. Church architecture was proudly displayed, with open naves and high, vaulted ceilings unobscured; Lotus did not add shells or other types of acoustic devices. In many cases, such architectural features actually gave the affect of “church” primacy over the affect of “festival,” as several consultants commented that the architecture tended to completely dwarf performers. Even in lobbies and ante-areas, church literature and religious text or iconography was clearly visible, alongside Lotus signage instructing attendees to only enter the sanctuary between songs. Finally, audiences entered and exited through grand,

towering wooden doors, and externally the church-as-venue was almost completely indistinguishable from church-as-church, except for the startling light projection of the Lotus logo that might shine on an external wall.



Figure 4.5: Performers “dwarfed” by the architecture at the First United Methodist Church, 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

In addition to the preservation of most of the spatial features that symbolically or viscerally mark church spaces as sacred or divine, it can be argued that the presence of the Lotus Festival also failed to diminish the ways in which past uses and peoples’ past experiences in church spaces inflected and informed festival experiences. Just as Lee commented that he preferred to choose venues that had previously been performance

spaces because people were “accustomed” to the occurrence or acceptability of certain activities in those spaces, the church spaces also “cued,” in the phenomenological sense explored earlier, certain recollections and frames of reference that became part of the construction of meaning there. Interviews and observations suggested two primary ways in which past spatial associations may have enabled or effected present festival liminality.

First, the architecture and symbols that cued a “church” frame of reference seemed to affect perceptions and expectations of appropriate behavior. While things like dancing or kinesthetic participation, mid-set entry and exit, consumption of food and beverage, or audience chatter were accepted (or at least tolerated) at other venues, some unspoken consensus seemed to deter these types of behaviors in the churches. It is further significant that this expectations seemed to be predicated on a recognition and affect of “church-ness” in general, rather than of a specific church—Karin and Tina both emphasized that most of the parishioners and congregants of the First United Methodist and First Christian Churches did not actually attend the Lotus Festival, so the Lotus audience was not acting on a sense of “my church” but rather of “church in general.” It is possible to argue that the experiences of attendees in other churches, houses of worship, or other types of sacred spaces provided a conceptual map for interpreting the festival experience in these venues—activities like dancing, getting up and leaving, or eating or talking are generally considered unacceptable during worship, and so church spatial elements may have tended to cue these more familiar proscriptions more strongly than the festival spatial elements cued more temporary allowances. When these elements (and their associated frames of reference) were juxtaposed, the result was a liminal space

where certain behaviors were permitted but were *perceived* as transgressive: for example, my friend's attempt to dance behind the pews—while dancing was an accepted and even popular mode of experiencing the Lotus Festival, and nobody in the church admonished my friend for dancing or even commented on it at all, she quickly stopped because it “felt odd” in the church. Another companion made a similar comment about audience members exiting the venue mid-performance—that it was fine in the tents, but that she didn't like “the getting up and leaving” in the church setting.

Other behaviors were marked not by virtue of their absence in the church, but by virtue of their absence in other venues. For example, Tina recounted a festival evening when a father and 10-year-old son entered the venue and the father admonished the son to remove his hat. When the son questioned this, the father replied “because you're in a church” (Tina Jernigan, personal interview). In this case, familiar frames of reference for appropriate behavior in sacred space led the father to prioritize those cues over Lotus Festival cues, where the removal of hats is not a typical festival behavior, even though the church was not ostensibly functioning as sacred space during those evening hours. Further, it is significant that the son was confused about the reason for his father's command, even though he would seem to be old enough to have had experience with the removal of hats in churches; it is possible that for the son, the “festival” spatial cues took precedence over the “church” spatial cues, which underscores the church-as-venue space as ambiguous.

In a second type of invocation of the church frame of reference, architectural and symbolic cues of “church-ness” also seemed to permit affective or emotional experiences that were not (or less) possible in other spatial settings—in particular, the oft-described

experiences of Lotus church performances as “spiritual” and “intimate.” In terms of the former, several consultants reported certain festival performances in church spaces feeling like “religious experiences.” For example, Tina noted that she once used this to respond to critics in the First Christian Church congregation who felt that “only church music should be played in a church”; she reported replying with the explanation that “God created those voices and gave them this wonderful gift” and that performances in the church often felt religiously moving, in that regard (Tina Jernigan, personal interview). Karin recalled her sense of a performance by Gillian Welch in the first year the First United Methodist served as a Lotus venue, where she had a heightened awareness of Welch’s “great theology, the amazing things she says and the values she has” and felt that “it’s too bad the whole parish can’t see what’s going on here tonight . . . this amazing moment that feels almost like a religious event” (Karin St. John, personal interview). In another example, a woman working as an emcee at the First Christian Church in 2004 recalled the performance by Samite feeling “like a church service.” She noted a part of the performance where he explained and then played a song for his wife who had recently died: “As he sang, people became teary-eyed and began crying, and after the song, when the house lights came up, people were hugging each other . . . it really was like the fellowship moment at the end of a church service” (Jessica Anderson-Turner, personal interview).

It could be argued that the built religiosity of the church spaces, as noted by the theorists discussed earlier, mobilized a liminal frame that enabled the attachment of religious significance to non-religious musical performances. What constituted a “religious” experience had a strong connection to past transportive experiences in sacred

space, as elements of performance were fitted into cued familiar frames of reference for religious meaning. These experiences could be connected to things like architecture, which cued sensations such as humility or spiritual uplift vis-à-vis particular spatial relationships, or else recollections of religious leaders using crucifix-adorned altar spaces as a site for performing religious ritual, contributing to formative anticipations of meaning attached to a musical artist performing from the same spot. In a similar way, relational-spatial cues for religious frames of reference might also have enabled the oft-cited feelings of “intimacy” in church performance venues. Christian theology and ritual puts an emphasis on the formation of a personal relationship with God, and this personal relationship is dramatized in church spaces (especially through practices such as communion, etc.). During Lotus performances, it is possible that church-specific spatial elements such as iconography and the layout of the sanctuary, juxtaposed with festival elements, cued these experiences of personal connection and spiritual intimacy vis-à-vis Lotus performers.

Church Venues for Lotus 2005

On the basis of numerous schedule grids and the exploratory shuffling of potential artists for the 2005 Lotus Festival, Lee Williams ultimately made the decision to increase the number of church venues for 2005 from two to three. He planned to retain the use of the First Christian Church and the First United Methodist Church and to add a new venue—the First Presbyterian Church, located on the corner of Lincoln Street and 6th Street.⁶ As noted earlier, this decision was not without some concern from other festival

⁶ This church had been used on and off as a Lotus venue since 1999; it was not used in 2004.

producers, specifically some members of the Venues Committee who feared that the festival would become “too churchy” and negatively impact overall perceptions of the festival as a lively, energetic, danceable affair. Others perceived the use of churches as venues as a valuable part of what made the Lotus Festival unique and evocative of a distinctly downtown-Bloomington festival identity.



Figure 4.6: The First Presbyterian Church. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

In the end, the decision to continue and even increase the use of churches as Lotus venues was based heavily on the types of past festival experiences described in this chapter, as perceived by Lee and other festival producers via personal experience and

audience feedback. Further, this decision was based on a majority positive evaluation of the church “vibe” that producers hoped would be maintained in 2005—that these spaces would continue to be powerful sites of performance characterized by affects of reverence and intimacy. The topics of sacred-secular liminality and churches as Lotus venues will be revisited in Chapter 6, as part of the presentation of data and analyses from the actual 2005 festival event.

Making the Festival Happen: Volunteer Committees

Introduction

Starting around May and continuing through the festival event in September, more and more people became actively involved in the festival production process. These were the volunteer committees—small groups of community members (usually 3-7 people, sometimes more) who contributed an incredible number of hours towards tackling the many details of staging a multi-day, multi-sited festival. Most of these people had been involved with Lotus for many years; even those who were new to a particular committee had volunteered at one or more past festivals in various capacities “on the ground”—working their way up from shifts as venue door monitors to positions of increasing responsibility—and had been recruited to committee involvement on the basis of their good work and demonstrated interest in making the festival happen. Committee members all held down “real” jobs or had significant personal responsibilities outside of the Lotus organization, but most still volunteered an average of 25 hours of

their time in the months immediately preceding the festival, with some people putting in considerably more than that. A few of the committee leaders fell under the rubric of “coordinator” and received a small stipend from LEAF because of the incredible amount of time involved (i.e., the Volunteer Coordinator and Sites Coordinator).¹ My research showed, however, that these individuals still self-identified as volunteers and accepted that they would put in as many hours as it took to get the job done, rather than the far fewer hours that would be more commensurate with the pay they were receiving. All of the committee participants with whom I spoke—coordinators, chairpersons, and group members—similarly attributed their motivation to the “intrinsic benefits” of volunteering and flatly rejected the notion that they were in it for the complimentary tickets that reward most volunteers for festival shifts. In fact, many of the committee volunteers had taken on so many responsibilities during the festival event in past years that they had been unable to actually attend any performances; however, this was perceived as one problem, among others, that some changes in 2005 were designed to remedy.

These volunteer committees typically began populating and meeting in late April or May,² and they played a vital role in bringing the festival to life. Armed with the model of the festival that had emerged from the visioning and programming processes, this phase of festival production was concerned with addressing the practical details of such a large event. Although in past years most of the committee activities revolved around execution of decisions already in place, after the 2004 event many staff and committee volunteers felt that substantial festival production responsibilities should be

¹ The coordinator stipend averaged \$1500.

² As noted in Chapter 3, some committees such as Visual Arts met year-round but began to intensify their activities as the festival approached.

divided and delegated among more people, for two major reasons. First, there was the admission of “burnout” by key volunteer personnel who had simply been taking on too much for too long; many of these people were also frustrated by the fact that festival growth had resulted in so many on-site responsibilities for key individuals that they could no longer experience the music. Second, and not unrelated, was the felt need to shape the festival production process more as an institution and less as the brainchild of a few individuals—to involve more people in the process and to create an “institutional memory” that would sustain festival production over time, after those particular individuals had moved on to other things. These conversations, most of which took place as private chats between September 2004 and April 2005, ultimately resulted in two important changes in the 2005 committee structure: the shift from a single Sites Coordinator to a Sites Committee and four Sites sub-committees, and a shift to a more advisory and decision-making role for all committees (in contrast to a focus on pure execution). This latter change also resulted in a concentrated effort on the part of Lee and other long-time volunteer leaders to share as much production information as possible with committee members, taking previously individual decisions and creating an environment with more voices, increased debate, and collaborative ownership of the resulting decisions.

Lotus Committee Descriptions

Production of the Lotus Festival involved the hard work of six primary committees who worked in close conjunction with Lee to handle the myriad practicalities

of the event.³ Each committee met independently and concentrated on a different area of production, although some key volunteer personnel sat on more than one committee in order to provide some continuity among their activities and heighten awareness of areas in which their planning might overlap (for example, the Volunteer Coordinator attended meetings of the Venues Committee in order to keep track of the volunteer needs associated with venue staffing). Lee attended all meetings of all committees (or as many as his schedule would allow) in order to coordinate the big picture and keep everything on track—he provided current information about ongoing festival planning, drew attention to important issues, offered advice based on experience with past festivals, emphasized priorities and deadlines, and frequently served as a liaison to help facilitate inter-committee communication. Committee leadership emerged as a rather diffuse notion, as the process was highly collaborative; however, each committee had a chairperson who organized meetings and kept track of agendas and committee priorities, while other committee members frequently took the lead on specific tasks.

Below are listed the six major Lotus committees, with information about their main responsibilities and activities—most of the committees listed in this section will not be dealt with extensively in this dissertation, but their contributions were important to the festival as a whole and thus merit an introduction here. While there has been a great deal of continuity from year to year in terms of general committee frameworks and basic responsibilities vis-à-vis the larger event, this section will also highlight some committee goals that were specific or new to 2005. Three committees—Venues, Street Closings/Tents, and Visual Arts—will receive brief treatment here but will be revisited

³ In 2005, there were also four additional sub-committees that were developed within the larger Sites Committee.

for deeper analysis in the subsequent sections. It is significant to note how few of the committee processes had anything to do with the music that would be performed (in terms of genre or particular artists), beyond the basic idea that musical performance, in general, was the operative framework for decision-making. In fact, most committee participants were completely unaware of the specific festival line-up until extremely late in the process.

Development

The Development Committee was coordinated by Deborah Klein, a permanent LEAF staff member who was responsible year-round for all of the organization's development needs (fundraising, grants, etc.). This committee was made up primarily of Board members, and they were responsible for festival fundraising and sponsor solicitation.

Publicity

The Lotus Publicity Committee was chaired by LuAnne Holladay, also a permanent LEAF staff member. This committee dealt with publicity for all LEAF activities, not just the festival, although the festival was the largest event of the year and took up much of the group's time (other events included Lotus Blossoms, the Lotus concert series, and various fundraising events). The goals of the Publicity committee were twofold—to educate people about the LEAF mission⁴ and all of the work that LEAF

⁴ In 2004-2005, the LEAF mission statement read: "The not-for-profit Lotus Education & Arts Foundation creates opportunities to experience, celebrate, and explore the diversity of the world's cultures, through music and the arts."

does, and to cultivate an audience for the festival. In addition to producing publicity pieces (which included copy, advertisements, posters, direct mail pieces, website, newsletters, festival pocket schedules, and the yearly Lotus t-shirt design and festival CD sampler), this committee was also charged in 2005 with marketing and launching the new “Lotus Pin”—a collectible cloisonné pin that was planned to have a new design each year.⁵

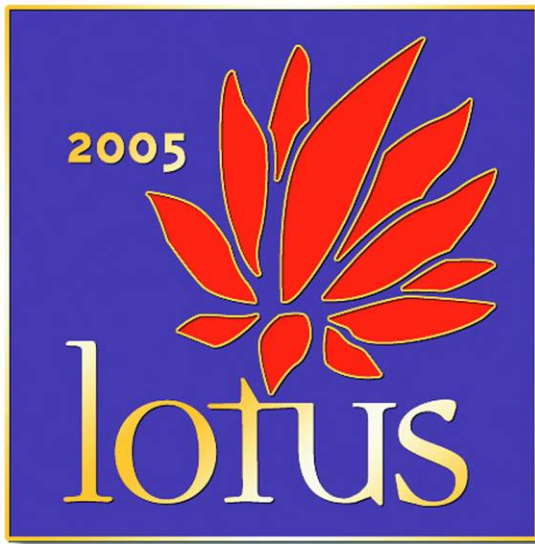


Figure 5.1: The 2005 Lotus collectible pin, designed by Julie Barnett.

Volunteers

The Lotus Festival has regularly depended on a huge corps of volunteer labor to make the event function, and the Volunteer Committee handled the recruitment, training, and management of these participants. Led by a stipended Volunteer Coordinator (in

⁵ Based on a similar device used at other festivals, the overall concept of the pin was that people could buy (for \$5.00) and wear it to support free Lotus events and to “show support of what Lotus is in the community” (LuAnne Holladay, meeting remarks). It was also envisioned as a way for people who couldn’t afford a ticket to still support and participate in the event. In 2005, Lotus wound up staging a summer concert to “launch” the pin, and one of the Thursday night festival events had “the pin gets you in” admission.

2005, this started out as Malke Rosenfeld, who left to have a baby and ceded the position to Patrick Coad), the Volunteer Committee was composed of a Steering Group and a Working Group—the former group met year-round and coordinated policy and overarching structures for volunteer participation in all LEAF events, while the latter group focused specifically on the Lotus Festival. The responsibilities of this committee covered the entire spectrum of volunteer contribution: from working with other committee coordinators to determine festival volunteer needs, to recruitment efforts and scheduling assignments/shifts, to volunteer support during the event, to post-festival volunteer recognition events.

Sites

The purview of “Sites” at Lotus included everything to do with the physical layout, structures, and logistics of the festival, as well as the provision of “hospitality” (food and other services) for artists. Up until 2005, Sites responsibilities were handled by a single Sites Coordinator, with support from a small group of volunteers; Tamara Loewenthal had held this position since 1996.⁶ Citing burnout and the need for a wider knowledge base, in 2005 Tamara and Lee met to discuss ways to diversify and delegate Sites responsibilities so as to take the pressure off a single individual and make these processes more sustainable over time. The result for 2005 was the new Sites Committee, chaired by Tamara but comprised of four focused sub-committees, which were chaired and convened independently (some responsibilities overlapped). The chairperson of each sub-committee then participated in Sites meetings where sub-committee issues were

⁶ Prior to Tamara, Sites issues were handled by Joe Burgess (Tamara Loewenthal, personal interview).

shared, discussed, and applied to the total picture of festival structures and logistics. The four sub-committees included:

Venues Sub-Committee: This group was responsible for coordinating structures, logistics, and staging for all indoor and outdoor performance venues, as well as providing site plans for each venue and serving as a liaison for venue needs. Discussions included such topics as building stages, coordinating PA systems and lighting, determining volunteer needs, understanding insurance liability and coverage, plotting entry and exit plans, and creating plans for festival logistics in the event of inclement weather.

Street Closings and Tents Sub-Committee: As its name suggests, this group worked to coordinate downtown street closures, plan for tent usage, and generally tend to the pre-arrangement of outdoor space for the festival. Considerations included tent rentals, signage, the solicitation and delivery of barricades and cones, close communication with the Bloomington City Council and Board of Public Works, creation of a street closings plan and notification of affected residents and businesses, provision of trash and recycling arrangements, and outdoor lighting. This sub-committee worked very closely with the Venues group on the coordination of the outdoor street stages, aspects of which applied to both sub-committees.

Set-up/Teardown Sub-Committee: The members of this group took responsibility for actually constructing and removing festival structures and infrastructure items. Working from plans provided by both the Venues and Street Closings/Tents sub-committees, they

coordinated staffing for and executed work related to such things as provision of electricity, transportation of materials, building and breaking down temporary stages, and the placement of barricades.

Artist Relations Sub-Committee: This group tended to the coordination and execution of plans related to artist needs and artist comfort while in Bloomington. Their considerations included group transportation to and from the airport, in-town shuttles for personnel and instruments/gear, artist housing, artist meals, locations and provisions for artist rest and relaxation, spaces and furnishing for backstage dressing rooms, backstage hospitality items (water, towels, snacks), and the post-festival artist party.

Visual Arts

As will be discussed in more detail momentarily, the Visual Arts Committee was responsible for bring visual elements to the Lotus Festival site. At past events, these elements had included backdrops for venue stages, large art installations in the streets, displays of artwork and altars designed by local participants, banners and decorative lighting, and the street parades that punctuated the festival in recent years. Evolving from a strategy of indoor exhibitions in galleries in the early years of the festival, this committee had shifted its mandate to focus on “art in the street.” The Visual Arts Committee was chaired in 2005 by Lucy Schaich and was, as usual, populated by local artists who designed and produced many of the art elements used in the festival space; this committee met year-round but expanded its activities dramatically for the festival. In

2005, this committee was also charged with organizing the art elements and art activities associated with the new city-sponsored “Lotus in the Park” event.

Merchandise

The Merchandise Committee, chaired in 2005 by Brandi Host, was responsible for organizing and managing all of the non-ticket merchandise that was sold during the Lotus Festival. This included Lotus-branded items such as Lotus t-shirts and posters (and, for 2005, the Lotus pin), but it also included all of the CDs that individual artists brought to sell at the festival. Artists either mailed their CDs in advance or brought them along when they traveled to Bloomington; either way, the Merchandise Committee checked-in and inventoried these items and organized them for sale in the festival Merchandise Tent that was set up on Kirkwood Avenue. Artists did not sell their own CDs at the festival; rather, Merchandise volunteers handled all of the CD transactions at a set price of \$16.00 per CD with Lotus taking a small commission (15 percent) from each sale. The members of the Merchandise Committee were also responsible for settling up with the artists after the festival and reconciling all of the merchandise receipts.

Contested Space (Part 2): Street Closings and Street Stages

In 2005, the newly-created Venues and Street Closings sub-committees played key roles in debating and crafting a spatial identity for the Lotus Festival, in terms of creating a secure festival geography as well as manifesting the idea of the “outdoor street stages” that emerged from the visioning process. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, a landscape of pedestrian-only regions had been a part of the festival since its early years.

On the surface, this had primarily to do with safety considerations, as the simultaneously multi-venue model of the event required participants to cross streets frequently throughout the evening; the closures also turned the streets into wider paths for the increased pedestrian flow during the event. Only in recent years had the closed streets also become a “canvas” for visual arts elements designed to enhance the festive atmosphere and affect of festival space outside of performance venues, a topic which will be discussed later in this chapter. Street closures were proposed primarily on the basis of venue locations, encompassing both venue addresses (indoor and outdoor) as well as the corridors which allowed the most direct movement between venues. Other closures derived from the multitude of one-way street that define the traffic infrastructure of downtown Bloomington—if a one-way street’s only outlet was slated to be barricaded, then the dead-end block was also closed.

Street Closings: Many Claims, Many Voices

While street closures were unanimously considered a necessary festival element by all of the event producers, other stakeholders and constituencies were not necessarily always so agreeable. In prior years, the loudest voices had typically come from the owners of the local businesses sited on or near the streets that Lotus proposed to block to vehicle traffic. Some of these owners had expressed very positive views about the street closures, citing the increased visibility of their business to large crowds of locals and out-of-towners, even if they were not open in the evenings. Some businesses even extended their hours during festival time to take advantage of the increased foot traffic. Local restaurateurs seemed especially unified in voicing support for the closures, as hungry

festival goers flocked through their doors for convenient sustenance. Many restaurants easily filled their outdoor seating with participants seeking to stay close to the action, and some even added tables on the sidewalk; other restaurants, such as Greek's Pizzeria on Kirkwood, set up outdoor stands to sell their food on the sidewalk to audience members in a hurry. In fact, Lee frequently noted the possibility of greater restaurant participation in the Lotus "street scene" as a strong argument for Lotus' proposal to close even more streets in 2005.

Others have not been so happy with the arrangements. Many locals who did not attend the festival found the traffic detours frustrating, and one resident complained to me that Lotus "cuts the town in half and makes it impossible to get anywhere." Since Lotus street closures have typically stayed in effect for multiple days, many business owners agreed that the closures were a disruption, creating a hassle for their customers who wanted to drive to the area. This is especially true for the businesses that were not open in the evenings, since their disruption did not come with the trade-off of increased evening patronage. Parking was also a major concern. Downtown Bloomington has limited parking options to begin with,⁷ and the closure of roughly 8.5 blocks removed a significant number of spaces. Festival audiences were not as affected by this parking shortage, since several downtown parking garages were free in the evenings and absorbed the bulk of audience vehicles; however, more than one downtown business owner had complained that Lotus street closures denied parking to potential customers who wished

⁷ Although there are several metered parking garages a few blocks from the square, parking on the street is free and in incredibly high demand, with a 2-hour limit on all street spaces. Most downtown parking lots are either privately-owned or are reserved by the university for cars with IU permits.



Figure 5.2: “No Parking” signs warn of closures during the 2005 Lotus Festival. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

to shop during the day. Further, several business owners had complained that it is expensive enough for them to maintain a downtown presence, without the city taking things away. Finally, the increased exposure to large Lotus crowds did not seem to be a mitigating factor for those who objected, possibly because of a perception that the type of people who comprised the Lotus audience were not their target consumer base. Several festival producers expressed their opinion that the business owners who complained were

typically the more “mainstream” businesses who felt that Lotus “was not bringing in *their* clientele,” while restaurants and the more “alternative” businesses tended to be more positive about the festival’s impact on traffic (Tamara Loewenthal, personal interview). Similarly, one city official commented to me that “some of the issues have to do with whether or not a business shares the same market with Lotus—businesses that share that target population tend to support the event, while some businesses see a gap between their market and the Lotus market, and that causes trouble” (Danise Alano, personal interview).

Lotus organizers were very aware of these different voices. Lee commented that although city policies technically gave Lotus the right to close streets (as long as they went through the proper channels to do so), the organization had tried to be sensitive to multiple needs and had tried to cultivate dialogue between Lotus and the affected parties. In past years, Lotus volunteers or staff members had mailed or delivered letters to all business establishments on streets, informing them of the proposed closures. As mandated by city policy, these letters also served to invite the affected parties to attend the Board of Public Works meeting where the resolution would be presented and voted on; Lee noted that sometimes people had “shown up to rant,” while in other years the proposal had been passed without incident.

This process of negotiation took new shape in 2005, as the City of Bloomington officially entered into the fray for the first time and took steps to facilitate communication. The change came with the November 2004 election of Mark Kruzan as the Mayor of Bloomington. While the previous mayoral administrations had supported Lotus on general principle, Kruzan saw the Lotus Festival as a way to breathe life into the

three goals of his campaign platform: to promote economic vitality, to preserve the community character, and to improve the human condition. In order to achieve those goals, Kruzan requested and got approval for city budget line items for promotional business funds, which he proceeded to allocate for the arts—*as business*. In his view, according to a representative from the Mayor’s office, the arts were a strong economic development agent for Bloomington, in terms of attracting tourists and creating jobs, and the Lotus Festival provided a dramatic illustration of those principles (Danise Alano, personal interview).

The support of the Mayor’s office resulted in \$15,000 worth of city funding for a new, free Lotus event in Third Street Park during the festival, as described in Chapter 3. The Mayor’s support, however, also served to throw some weight behind Lotus’s request to close downtown streets. Even in his press conference announcing the park initiative, Kruzan stood behind Lotus on this issue, stating for the record that

I in no way view it as a sacrifice to be closing streets or sidewalks during this festival . . . this is exactly the kind of thing I want to do and am encouraging to have happen in this community. And if you go to any other (much larger) city . . . where there are music festivals, there are a lot of big changes that take place because we need to do it to welcome a festival like this into our front yard. (Mark Kruzan, remarks from a press conference, 6 July 2005)

City participation and mayoral support also helped smooth the way for the 2005 first-ever closure of Walnut Street for the Lotus Festival, a proposal that the City of Bloomington had refused to even consider in past years (see Chapter 3).



Figure 5.3: Barricades await placement on Walnut Street, a few minutes before 6:00 pm on the Friday evening of Lotus Festival 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

The 2005 planning process included more City of Bloomington voices than ever in the past. Officials from the Board of Public Works created GIS maps to plot the locations of businesses, parking, and detours, and they also served as liaisons between Lotus and emergency service providers wishing to weigh in on the proposed closures. Working in conjunction with volunteers on the Street Closings subcommittee, city officials participated in discussions of detour plans and signage, types and locations of barricades, and strategies for limiting access to alleyways and other thoroughfares. All of these negotiations were marked by the presence of detailed, [computer-generated maps](#).

These GIS and other maps played a large role in the 2005 street closings process. Such “representations of space”⁸ were frequently employed at committee meetings and were used to help production participants conceptualize and reify the “festival geography” as a graphic sign or image. However, while past years had seen the use of rough sketches to help committee members visualize the proposed closures, the 2005 process was significant in its use of computer-generated maps provided by the City of Bloomington. These maps, created by city infrastructure experts, showed detailed street and structure contours and were color-coded by day and time of closure; various iterations of the same map were created to reflect ongoing decisions and issues, and later versions also detailed detour plans and the locations of detour signage and specific types of barricades. It is my contention that the creation of these city-generated and city-sanctioned maps served to legitimize the Lotus street closure proposal and concretize an abstract conceptualization of space (the secure, pedestrian-only “festival geography”) as a specific spatial reality.

Scholar Benedict Anderson describes this process as “the alignment of map and power,” and quotes the Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul to expand upon this idea of mapping as prescriptive and legitimizing:

In terms of most communications theories and common sense, a map is a scientific abstraction of reality. A map merely represents something which already exists objectively ‘there.’ In the history I have described, this relationship was reversed. A map anticipated spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent . . . It had become a real instrument to concretize projections . . . A map was now necessary for the new

⁸ Henri Lefebvre bases much of his theory on the interplay among three primary forms of spatiality: spatial practice, representations of space, and spaces of representation. For more detail on these concepts, see Lefebvre 1991 and Light and Smith 1998a.

administrative mechanisms . . . to back up their claims. (Anderson 1991:174-75)

In this way, just as audience festival maps (described in Chapter 3) helped produce for festival goers a certain new spatial/orientational reality (“festival space”) out of existing physical space, these city-generated street closing maps helped manipulate and impose—rather than reflect—the redefinition of the downtown landscape. They also played a role in legitimizing and empowering Lotus claims by graphically indexing government processes.

In addition to the production of maps, other city officials worked with Lotus to identify everyone (businesses and residents) who needed to be informed of proposed 2005 street closures, in an effort to formalize the communications plan. The city requested that Lotus hand-deliver all [letters](#) and do so well in advance of the Board of Public Works meeting on August 23, 2005, but they also helped with the legwork and served as an intermediary sounding board for the affected parties. Finally, a representative from the Office of the Mayor spoke formally on behalf of Kruzan at the Board of Public Works meeting, reiterating mayoral support for the street closings resolution and noting both the mayor’s feeling that the pedestrian-only festival perimeter makes the festival “more enjoyable and more safe.” She also estimated that the Lotus Festival brought at least \$800,000 into the local economy. This representative further noted city receipt of only one complaint in response to the 2005 information letter; no affected parties were present at the meeting. Ultimately, the 2005 Lotus Festival [street closings resolution](#) was approved by the Board of Public Works, on the condition that Lotus and the City of Bloomington take special care to monitor and evaluate the traffic patterns or issues that result from the new closure of Walnut.

The examples presented here clearly illustrate that the “ordinary” Lotus street closures were already contentious, especially in terms of traffic right-of-ways, street access for residents and emergency service providers, and the interests of downtown businesses concerned about access and parking for their customers. These various interests were also recognized at the Board of Public Works meeting, even though almost no representatives were present to speak on their behalf. Producer awareness of past and ongoing protestations or complaints illustrate that the street closures brought to light certain ambiguities about public space that already existed under the surface of downtown life, especially in terms of perceptions of “ownership” of spaces that were actually far less clearly attributed—for example, some retailers felt entitled to specific functionality of public streets and sidewalks, while others spoke of “my” parking spaces on the basis of proximity to a particular storefront. This fuzzy line between what was public and private in the urban landscape was exacerbated and expanded when the closure of streets contributed to the imagination of a “festival geography” that was simultaneously “Bloomington space” and “Lotus space,” in addition to the layers of other interests and voices that underscored and defined those identities and reifications. For 2005, however, the already-controversial nature of downtown space would reach an entirely new level with the creation of Lotus’s “outdoor street stages,” where the denial of vehicular access would expand to become the denial of *all* access to non-ticketholders.

Outdoor Street Stages

Although not prominently discussed at the Board of Public Works meeting, one important change for 2005 was buried in the resolution text and represented a significant

new type of street closure for Lotus. As described in Chapter 3, the “outdoor street stages” were a cornerstone of the 2005 plan and were designed as a solution to the “freebie” problem that many felt was threatening the festival’s ability to support itself through ticket revenue. Earlier sections of this dissertation have described the rationale for the plan; however, the inclusion of the outdoor street stages in the 2005 model was not an easy path for producers. The proposal raised many issues for Lee Williams in his private deliberations and was a frequent topic of Lee’s discussions with representatives from the City of Bloomington; the mechanics of the proposal were also hotly debated by volunteer producers on the Venues and Street Closings subcommittees. The present discussion of “contested space,” therefore, will focus on how these various deliberations and conversations engaged conflicting views about the nature of public and private space, as well as exploring various issues of inclusion and exclusion vis-à-vis citizen rights, socio-economic class, and the rhetoric of “neighborhood” of the Lotus message and mission.

The sites for the outdoor street stages were carefully selected on the basis of a number of criteria, including the relative ease of blocking visual and/or sonic access for non-ticket holders, the number of points of access and the difficulty of policing boundaries, and the degree of conflicting claims to the space. My observations suggested that these criteria were considered in roughly the given order of priority, with the construction of particular experiences for ticketed vs. non-ticketed participants topping the list; this clearly underscored the rationale for the creation of these stages in the first place. For example, [the site on 4th Street](#), located on the western half of the block

between Walnut Street and College Avenue, was selected largely because its existing architecture was conducive to controlling access and blocking views of a stage.



Figure 5.4: Planned site for 4th Street outdoor stage (Monroe Bank Stage). (Photo by Sunni Fass)

Large pillars supporting a skywalk created natural bottleneck points on the sidewalk and provided visual barriers, food-service tents could be constructed under the skywalks, and the skywalk itself could be used as a hanger for large banners that would reach the top of the tents—thus blocking almost all sightlines from the east. Further, that half-block had only one point of alley access; all other access to the street was through buildings that would be closed during the festival. There were few residences or businesses on that section of 4th Street, reducing the number of potential conflicts of interest or access.

Finally, this site became especially attractive after the closure of a block of Walnut Street was promised, signifying that patrons would be able to access the site within a secure festival perimeter.

The selection of the site for the second outdoor street stage seemed similarly clear-cut at first but eventually became one of the most contentious aspects of 2005 festival planning. The particular block of 6th Street in question (between Walnut Street



Figure 5.5: Planned site for the 6th Street outdoor stage (Union Board Stage). (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

and Washington Street) had been a tent site in prior years, but the new plan to block all non-ticketed access raised new issues. Lee found the site attractive for the high buildings on both sides of the street which provided natural barriers to visual access, and the slope of the street promised good sightlines for people within the boundaries, if the stage were placed at the east (downhill) end of the block. However, unlike the relatively isolated half-block of 4th Street, there are numerous conflicting claims to the 6th Street area—at

least five different businesses operated on the south side of the block,⁹ apartments and condominiums lined both sides of the street, a restaurant (Roots) had an outdoor patio on the southwest corner, and the northeast corner sported a private parking lot.



Figure 5.6: Roots restaurant, with its outdoor patio on the corner of Walnut and 6th Streets.
(Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Further, these claims overlapped temporally with the claims of the festival—unlike other areas where businesses were closed in the evenings, on this block several stores (the Plan 9 video store, Roots restaurant, and the Vintage Phoenix comic book store) would be open during some or all of the festival hours. Nevertheless, when asked about potentially using a less-populated block instead, Lee prioritized the importance of controlling access over the challenge of accommodating multiple claims. He called the

⁹ These included Vintage Phoenix (a comic book store), Plan 9 (a video store), Qaisar Oriental Rug, Exotic Floral Designs, and a photo studio called Michael Lindsay Photography.

presence of many buildings the “best scenario,” far preferable over blocks lined with lawns and parking lots where people could have unimpeded physical and visual access.

Due to these multiple claims, the proposed street stage on 6th Street caused the most debate during the planning process, whereas the proposed 4th Street site barely raised an eyebrow. In particular, discussions in the Venues and Street Closings committee revolved around the felt need to develop a policy or plan for allowing or restricting different types of access. These types of access seemed to fall on a continuum of total access or total restriction. On the poles, all producers agreed on the need to allow residents and business owners access to dwellings and shops, and to restrict non-ticket holder access to primary venue spaces; proposed solutions included handing out special passes or keeping a list of names at the entry points. Grey areas existed, however, in terms of temporary or intermediate access for less clear or less predictable functions—customers wishing to access retail establishments, friends visiting residents of the street’s apartments or condos, or pedestrians wishing to use the block as an east-west corridor. What about a shop patron who made a purchase and then lingered on the sidewalk to watch a performance? A self-defined passer-by who then moved off the sidewalk into the street venue? People claiming (either truly or falsely) to be headed for a friend’s dwelling? Debate tended to center around the use of the sidewalk—did Lotus have the right to deny sidewalk access, or only street access? Could they leave the sidewalks open but build higher fencing to block visual access to performances on the street? Proposed

solutions variously involved fenced corridors for business access, guest lists, and/or volunteer escorts for passage through restricted space.¹⁰



Figure 5.7: Fencing separates the sidewalk and Plan 9 from the 2005 festival venue space on 6th Street, while a building resident watches the action from the roof. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Such debates clearly pointed to acknowledgment of the construction of an outdoor street venue on 6th Street as the construction of highly ambiguous space. On some levels,

¹⁰ For example, in a conversation between one of the owners of the Plan 9 video store, the owner made suggestions that included giving out special Plan 9 wristbands to customers so they could access the block; directing all customers to one entrance/access point to show said wristband or explain their purpose (he also offered to create the appropriate signage for this); having a Lotus volunteer stationed in the store to escort people out when they're done; or fencing off part of the sidewalk from the designated entrance point to the store entrance, so the only people in there would be customers, and could be moved along accordingly. The owner, a long-time fan of the festival, was willing to collaborate on a solution but was also concerned about protecting his own interests, given that Friday and Saturday evenings are his busiest hours.

as noted above, attempts were made to reduce this ambiguity and use such strategies as fencing to divide “festival” from “public” corridors or regions. On other levels, however, spatial ambiguities were left unresolved, and I would like to argue that the construction of these tensions contributed to the juxtapositions of public/private and inclusive/exclusive and the resultant creation of spatial liminality in the outdoor festival venues, especially on 6th Street. Two primary types of tension wound up contributing to the liminal status of this site and its imagination during the planning process: tension over the nature of access to public streets vs. the imposition of private claims, and tension over issues of exclusion vis-à-vis the nature of a “community” event.

Public vs. Private Space: City Streets, Lotus Streets

Hénaff and Strong define a distinction between “public” and “private” space in the following way:

A space is private when a given individual or set of individuals are recognized by others as having the right to establish criteria that must be met for anyone else to enter it . . . Private is to be understood as distinguished from public as much by virtue of ownership as by virtue of the standards that have to be met in order to enter . . . The significant thing about the ownership and its attendant standards here is that they are under the control of an individual (possible corporate) . . . what is private is a possession of some being and cannot be entered without permission. (Hénaff and Strong 2001:2-3)

In contrast, space that is public is defined primarily by its contestability and its status as a realm of ongoing contestation about the nature of a life in common with others; control is not an individual privilege (Hénaff and Strong 2001:4-5). It is in this sense that the nature of public-ness is frequently analogous to the nature of debate as a component of definitions of democracy and civic responsibility in democratic society. As such, the

notion of public-ness is also frequently tied up with notions of *sight* and *visibility*—hearkening back to ancient Greece and Rome and the idea of a spatially-open forum or plaza/square for civic engagement, the idea that “public” processes are visible and transparent to all (see Hénaff and Strong 2001, Light and Smith 1998a). In a simpler definition, “public space” can be more broadly conceived as “the space to which all citizens are granted some legal rights of access” (Light and Smith 1998a:3)

Taken together, these various definitions and distinctions between public and private space make it easy to see how Lotus’s proposed use of the 6th Street site created tension and ambiguity, in spaces that were ostensibly public but imbued with an aura of pseudo-privacy on the basis of Lotus use. In everyday life, downtown Bloomington is a public area with unrestricted access to thoroughfares; while on some level the urban landscape and access to it are controlled by governmental units such as the City of Bloomington, city government and its processes answer to the voting population and are open to those who wish to participate in civic affairs. Even though Lotus’s co-option of these public spaces occurred through established and transparent channels (such as the Board of Public Works meeting described earlier), the details of the meeting revealed interesting ways in which Lotus’s proposed use of the 6th Street site fundamentally shifted the nature of the space in question. For example, the first page of resolution text asked for closures so that “Lotus can have control over the streets” listed; further, during the discussion at the meeting, Lee noted that Lotus is “requesting exclusive rights to two blocks, including sidewalks.” These notions of individual control and exclusivity directly contradicted what defines a space as public.

The right to limit access also distinguished the line between public and private. With the establishment of the outdoor street stages specifically designed to combat the problem of non-ticketed access to performance spaces, the restriction of access was a central part of the Lotus plan. While many residents acknowledged to me that they understand the rationale to limit venue access to paying audience members, many also found something unsatisfactory about the idea when the notion of “venue” was juxtaposed onto the space of “city street.” One consultant noted that “I pay taxes to be allowed to walk on those streets, and it doesn’t seem right that a private organization can deny me the right to be there.” Another consultant found it excessive that Lee and the volunteer committees were making special efforts to block sightlines as well as physical access; in light of the earlier argument about sight/vision as a component of public-ness, this suggests a perception of the blocking of sightlines as a further compromise of the rights of public space. These comments highlighted the fact that it was not Lotus’s proposed use of space in general (protecting ticketed areas) that created tension, but rather the ways in which Lotus’s proposed use of space was imposed onto existing landscapes that were perceived as realms of public access.

Festival producers’ awareness of these tensions between public and private were illustrated, in particular, by organizational difficulties in maintaining a clear naming strategy for the sites in question. In early planning phases, the establishment of these venues was perceived in terms exclusive to festival planning issues and strategies. Lee referred to these sites, as yet geographically undetermined, as the “outdoor street stages,” a term whose implications were clear only to Lotus staff and volunteers who had been privy to discussions during the visioning process (I quickly learned that using this phrase

outside of these circles drew blank looks). For these “insiders,” the notion of the “outdoor street stage” comprised the principles of controlled access for ticket-holders only, increased capacity, no tent cover, and a “street-party” vibe. This terminology also clearly conveyed an implication of “our” (private) space, in the tri-fold sense of being used for a Lotus-specific set of functions; of access being controlled by a Lotus-defined set of criteria; and of the population within the space (“us”) being identifiably opposed to a non-wristbanded population outside (“them”).

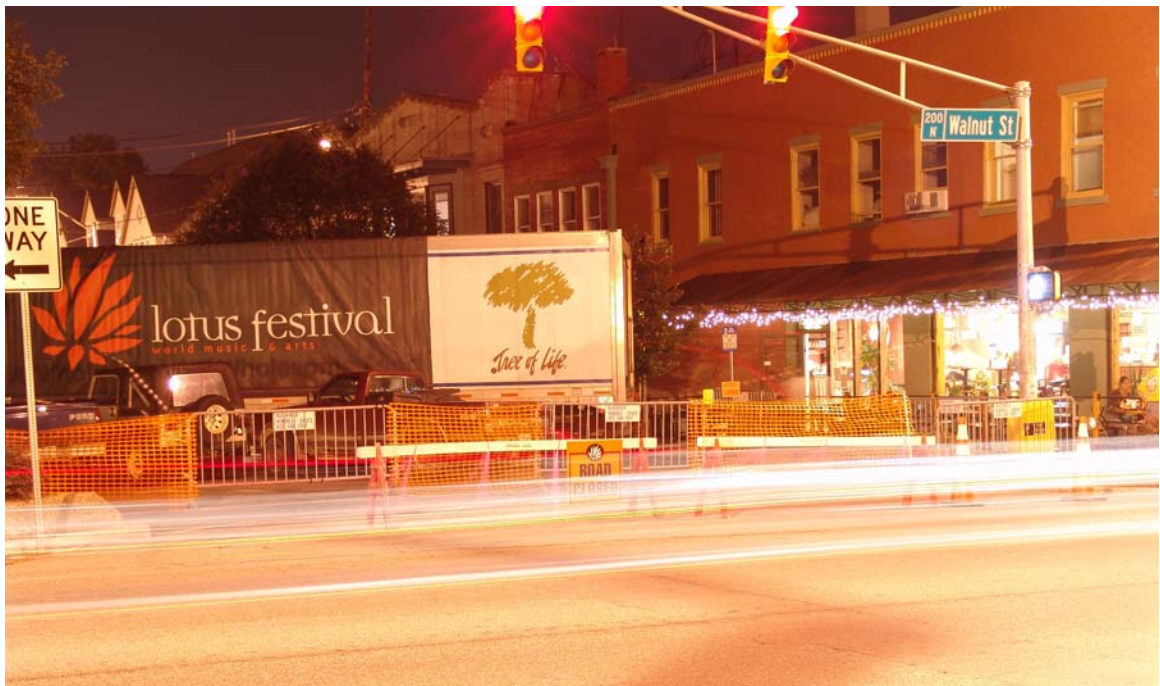


Figure 5.8: This truck, decorated with a large Lotus banner, was parked at one end of the 6th Street venue in order to block sightlines for non-ticketholders. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

While the notion of the “outdoor street stage” continued to be mobilized throughout the planning process, the determination of specific geographic sites for these venues led to the use of new names. Discussions began to center around the “4th Street stage” or the “6th Street stage,” and these designations, most prominent in the Venues and

Street Closings subcommittee meetings, dominated the volunteer-committee phase of production. In particular, these names dominated the committee debates about negotiating access for residents and businesses on the chosen sites, while limiting access to a (sometimes overlapping) population of non-ticket holders. The use of the everyday names for these areas (“4th Street” and “6th Street”) in these debates clearly underscored a perception of the public uses of these sites as existing in tension with the proposed Lotus use.

This use of everyday street names was especially significant in light of the fact that production participants were constantly being admonished to refer to these sites by their “official” Lotus names that reflected the sponsors of the stages on 4th Street and 6th Street—Monroe Bank Stage and the Union Board Stage, respectively. The act of calling these sites by their sponsor names would suggest a dual imposition of privacy onto formerly-public areas. First, sponsorship implied financial support in return for public exposure. Renaming a public area according to a sponsor name emphasized a sense of private ownership, or at least a sense that this particular site would not exist without support from an individual/corporate entity which deemed it worthy of existence. Second, the act of naming conferred a particular kind of power over that which was named, in a manner much like the alignment of mapping and power described earlier (see Anderson 1991). The power of the Lotus organization to rename a public area simultaneously conferred and reinforced an authority that suggested private control. In both cases, discourse (in this case, naming) contributed to the production of spatial reality, as illustrated by the use of sponsor names in all festival literature and publicity

materials, a practice which emphasized privacy, ownership, and the right to set criteria for entrance.

Most production participants, however, never seemed quite able to adopt the names “Monroe Bank Stage” and “Union Board Stage” during the production process, even up to and including the time of physical set-up on the first day of the festival—even during set-up, anyone eavesdropping on two-way radio conversations would have heard numerous requests to, for example, bring barricades to 4th Street or send volunteers to 6th Street.¹¹ While I do not believe that the use of street names was deliberate or a social statement of any kind, I would like to argue that the use of street-name terminology signaled that producers were highly (perhaps subconsciously) aware of the tensions that the 2005 festival production was creating between public and private. Discursively, for these participants the outdoor street stage sites were public streets first, being only secondarily transformed into private “Lotus space”; the debates at meetings clearly show an understanding of the ambiguities and conflicts created as a result of this transformation.

Our Neighborhood: Inclusion, Exclusion, and the Issue of Community

The other type of tension that characterized the production of the 6th Street outdoor venue had to do with ambiguities that emerged as a result of the way the Lotus message articulated with the development of methods for controlling access to the site. Lotus Festival literature and third-party press coverage alike strongly emphasized a sentiment of inclusion, sharing, and connection, typically employing terms like “breaking

¹¹ I, too, have chosen to refer to these stages by their street names throughout the dissertation, on the basis of the argument that it more accurately reflects the experience and perceptions of production participants.

down barriers,” “celebrating diversity,” and “the global village” to capture the “spirit of Lotus.” While LEAF offered many free events that realized this mission by their accessibility to the broadest possible range of participants, the reality of the festival evening events was that of a paid, ticketed event that supported itself largely through ticket revenues. The 2005 crackdown on unpaid viewing, which Lee called “philosophically difficult,” (Kauffman 2005) led to the creation of outdoor street stages with tighter controls on visual and physical access in order to help preserve fiscal stability. As a result, these new venues transformed public thoroughfares into pseudo-private spaces where access was rooted in expenditures of money (primarily) or time (secondarily, through volunteerism, etc.)—thus highlighting tensions between the rhetoric of “community” and perceptions of profit-motive and exclusivity, as expressed in the following excerpt from a letter to the editor in the local paper:

I can't believe the argument about a smaller audience base threatening the overall quality of the event. This event uses our public streets and our town; the people who watch, listen and dance without paying are not hurting the event. The festival has declined in quality due to high turnout, scheduling of too few acts at the same time, small venues and the almighty dollar, not because of a few people who don't pay. Yes, the Lotus Festival is a blessing to Bloomington, so let's not forget the spirit of Lotus Dickey and all the free music he made to share with his community. (Gras 2005)

To be fair, I also spoke with many, many people who supported the efforts of the Lotus organization to take steps to ensure its ability to continue the event in the long term, as well as many who appreciated the reminder that buying a ticket helped preserve the extent of artistic offerings at the festival. I also heard many comments, though, to the effect that the newly-restricted outdoor venues, as well as Lee's public comments about people who chose not to buy tickets, created an atmosphere which compromised the

“community spirit” of the event or painted non-ticket buyers as actively damaging to the festival. One consultant, an active member of the volunteer production corps, commented that limiting access to public streets to people who could afford a ticket smacked of class-based exclusion, implying that “if you’re poor you can’t walk here.” Lotus staff was extremely sensitive to these varying opinions, and awareness of perceptions even extended to the level of the LEAF Board of Directors, who supported the new proposals but also recommended caution when cutting back on a much-loved aspect of the festival—the ability to participate in the outdoor “vibe” for free (Shawn Reynolds, personal interview).

Given the range of public perceptions of the new developments for 2005, Lotus production staff took many steps to try to minimize this sense of conflict between the Lotus message and the fiscal realities of the event. In promotional materials, much emphasis was placed on the new “Lotus in the Park” festivities, the free afternoon events sponsored by the City of Bloomington. Public comments about this new event stressed accessibility for families and people who couldn’t afford evening tickets, noting that the same artists would be performing and that the quality of the afternoon event was equal to the quality of the later shows. Lee and other staff perceived this offering as a “balance” to the new evening restrictions.

In terms of constructing the street venues for the evening events, while there was agreement among production participants that participants without wristbands should be denied entry to the venue space, there were several notable conversations about how that should be accomplished and to what extent casual viewing should be discouraged. As discussion became focused on the issue of maintaining some degree of sidewalk access

while completely securing street areas, proposed solutions ranged from constructing high fences or using large banners to prevent passers-by from seeing the stage, to stationing uniformed guards along the perimeter to enforce boundaries, to using volunteers to ask non-ticketed spectators to “move along.”

It quickly became very clear that most production participants were uncomfortable with any obvious trappings of exclusion, perceiving them as antithetical to the Lotus message. High fencing or large visual barricades were rejected, with committee members commenting that we “wouldn’t feel good about that” and worrying about putting the image out to the public that “we don’t let people in.” Some committee volunteers felt that using uniformed security guards to “police” perimeters might detract from the “goodwill atmosphere” that Lotus otherwise represents, preferring the gentler admonitions of festival volunteers. Others had the opposite opinion, preferring the use of uniformed guards as a way to redirect potential ill-will away from Lotus or things that represent Lotus (such as volunteers). Debates also included the position of not doing any policing at all, or having volunteers approach non-wristbanded spectators and let them know, in a friendly way, that “the tent to purchase wristbands is just across the street”—the rationale from one consultant being that “these are people who are obviously interested in what Lotus is offering” and that she “would hate to see them turned away by someone who says ‘stop watching,’ because it might turn them away for the long term” (Danise Alano, personal interview).

It is significant to note that divisions between paying and non-paying participants were nothing new to Lotus—indoor venues had exercised access controls since the origins of the festival. While there had certainly been observations over the years about

the ticket price seeming high for certain audiences or about the need to continue cultivating free activities to help bring the festival offerings to underserved populations, the 2005 production process marked a heightened attention to issues of exclusion as well as an increase in both organizational and public debates about access. I would like to argue that the reason for this attentional boost was directly connected to the reconfiguration of space that marked the new festival model—that the Lotus Festival had always been marked by a tension between inclusion and exclusion, but that spatial manipulations in 2005 served to heighten perceptions of this ambiguity.

In the previous chapter, I described one consultant who commented on the tent venues used prior to 2005 and noted a powerful feeling of “belonging” that occurred among the people who were able to enter the structure. Similarly, Lee and other festival producers frequently spoke of the non-paying crowds around tent perimeters as “unfair” to the people who paid to be inside the tent, only a few feet away. These and analogous comments suggested the perception that buying a ticket conferred or provided access to an affect or benefit that could not or should not be achieved without a wristband. Further, Lee several times emphasized to me the importance of “value” associated with a ticket, noting that the organization tried to counter perceptions of high ticket prices by stressing the value that the price affords. Terms such as “unfair” highlighted this idea that that value decreased when the same benefits could be accrued without payment, and that the creation of the outdoor street stages was one method for reinstating value—that ticket holders paid for an experience distinct from that of non-ticket holders.

Just as my consultant equated his sense of “belonging” with being inside a space designated as “exclusive” by fencing and entry controls, I would argue that the positive

affect of *communitas* frequently cited by festival participants had much to do with this feeling of sharing an experience that was unique and special. Even though the Lotus rhetoric spoke of “community,” in reality the ticket mechanism created two distinct communities—those with access to venues and those without—and there were positive affective benefits to being part of the ticketed “Lotus crowd.” The sense of inclusion in this community was extended to the *idea* of simultaneous similar experiences in the multiple venues. This notion of the construction of a “festival community” via the idea of—rather than the sensory apprehension of—shared and/or simultaneous experiences over a larger area is somewhat reminiscent of Benedict Anderson’s theory of “imagined communities.” (Anderson 1991) The parallel is strengthened when Anderson’s core paradigm of print media is corresponded to the learned set of “Lotus skills” required to successfully navigate the event (see Chapter 3).

In past years, tent venues had blurred the distinction between these two communities—those with access and those without—by the use of insubstantial or unclear spatial boundaries, resulting in a variety of emotional or experiential responses. Some ticketed participants felt good about the inclusion of non-ticket holders in the tent experience, while others felt that the blurring was “unfair.” Some non-ticketed participants experienced an extension of *communitas* across the fencing, while another consultant cited “feeling left out.”

The new-for-2005 redefinition of festival space promised to make the social divide clearer by increasing the physical separation between these two communities and dramatizing the tensions inherent in having paid entry to a festival purporting to celebrate inclusion. People who hadn’t purchased tickets in the past but who still considered

participation in the Lotus Festival to be part of their identity as Bloomingtonians, suddenly encountered discursive and physical-spatial proof that they might not be part of the “Lotus community” after all. People who bought tickets on the basis of subscription to a positive ideology of inclusion and the celebration of a common humanity suddenly encountered discursive and physical-spatial proof that there might be flaws in that ideology. That these divisions would be acted out on the stage of a public city block only heightened the ambiguities inherent in the construction of festival space.

Lefebvre posits that “the relationships established by *boundaries* are certainly of the greatest importance . . . along with the relationship between boundaries and named places.” These relationships result in the production of various kinds of spaces, including “accessible space,” “boundaries and forbidden territories . . . to which access is prohibited either relatively or absolutely,” and “junction points [which are] often places of passage and encounter” (Lefebvre 1991:193). Lefebvre and Tuan also both note that these types of spatial relationships are experienced vis-à-vis the *self*, such that orientation to space and structures forms a part of a subjective identity (Lefebvre 1991; Tuan 1977). It is instructive that Lotus Festival producer debates centered on the borders of the street stage spaces and the points of entry and exit, in terms of “policing” boundaries and whether or not to take an active role in enforcing access policies. Expressed discomfort with overt barriers would suggest that it was the *emphasis* of physical-spatial boundaries, juxtaposed onto public space and inclusive rhetoric, that dramatized a sense of “us” and “them”—affective conceptions of self and other—within the population attempting to experience the Lotus Festival. It would further suggest that the “junction points” (to use Lefebvre’s term)—entry points and the regions along fencing or barricades—were

perceived as sites of particular spatial liminality, uncertainty, or social danger. Finally, it is also possible that the spatially-constructed tension among rhetorical inclusion, public landscapes, and exclusive access at a site such as 6th Street juxtaposed a sense of *communitas* (inclusion in a particular community) with a sense of civic transgression¹² (exclusion of certain populations from space typically perceived as public), thus contributing to a heightened potential for a liminal affect.

Visual Arts: Transforming Space

The other volunteer committee whose activities revolved around spatial considerations was the Visual Arts Committee, a group comprised mostly of local artists who accepted responsibility for imbuing the festival with what they called “visual splendor” (per an intentional terminological distinction from things that were strictly considered “art.”) While some aspects of this committee’s work pertained to the production of art elements to add visual interest to indoor or outdoor venues, the bulk of their activities addressed the “street scene”—the non-venue, non-ticketed outdoor areas that fell within the boundaries of the festival geography and were considered part of festival space. Examples of venue-oriented work in past years included stage backdrops or exhibits mounted in venue lobbies; examples of non-venue visual components included sculptures or other large-scale installations, displays of local artistic work, flags and banners, light projections, and street parades. Drawing largely from interviews with Visual Arts Committee chair Lucy Schaich, this section will conclude the present chapter by dealing with the Visual Arts Committee and the role of visual art vis-à-vis the Lotus

¹² The principles of *communitas* and transgression are both frequently cited in association with liminality. See Turner 1982.

Festival, especially the ways in which the use of visual elements helped to define perceptions of what was or was not festival space, as well as the ways in which these



Figure 5.9: The Lotus Gateway Arch, 2003. Designed by Susan Sammis, Merridee LaMantia, and Nicholas McGill. (Photo by Dylan Long)

elements contributed to the creation of spatial liminality within the bounded festival area. Theoretical analysis will reconnect the reader with some of the perspectives first introduced in Chapter 3's discussion of festival geography, specifically the relationship

between spatial orientation and the evaluation of place, as well as introducing some new ideas about festival visual art as meta-communicative performance.

History of the Visual Arts Mandate

The idea of including a visual component with the Lotus Festival emerged during the second year of the festival; many of the 2005 committee members had been participating on the Visual Arts Committee since its inception, including then-chair Susan Sammis. In the early years, visual arts at the festival was conceived as the coordination of indoor gallery exhibits, in conjunction with local art galleries or gallery spaces such as the John Waldron Arts Center. While media varied, one of my consultants recalled that the artwork presented comprised primarily what she called “traditional forms, things hanging on the walls” (Lucy Schaich, personal interview). Some of these exhibits were traveling exhibitions that were brought to Bloomington at festival time, while others involved shows by local artists. Other efforts entailed attempts to match exhibit themes with whatever parts of the world were represented at the festival in a given year, or else encouraging local galleries to mount their own exhibitions featuring themes or styles that might be of interest to festival patrons. Participants were usually local or from the nearby region, with the occasional international artist or accompanying lecture; the primary intention, according to an early organizer, was to use the gallery system to represent the local visual arts scene during the festival. Festival attendees received an information card which described the offerings at each gallery location and encouraged them to stop by.

As the indoor model evolved, festival producers began to feel that the Lotus visual arts components were not being seen by very many people, especially when

relatively low gallery attendance was compared to festival attendance as a whole, which was steadily growing. Organizers began to consider ideas for presenting art on a bigger scale, but it wasn't until the year 2000 that two separate and important events prompted a striking redefinition of the Lotus vision for art at the festival. The first of these involved a Brazilian Lotus artist named Chico César who brought a massive, colorful textile backdrop to hang behind the stage during his 2000 performance at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Visual arts organizers and Lotus staff fell in love with the effect, feeling that the backdrop "totally transformed" the stage area in a very dramatic way. After the festival that year, Lee called the performer's agent in Brazil to get more details about this type of installation (Lee Williams, personal interview). The popularity of the backdrop spurred an effort to secure funding, and the annual Lotus backdrop project was born—a call for local artists to compete for a yearly commission to design a backdrop for a Lotus venue. Usually hung in the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, the backdrops have also traveled to other venues; one current member of the Visual Arts Committee called the backdrops "the anchor of the first three years" of the new vision for the festival, and Lee agreed that the huge textile backdrops quickly became the "centerpiece" of the emerging goal of art on a larger scale.

Around the same time, another development also emerged on the Lotus visual arts scene with the recruitment of the current Visual Arts Committee chair, Lucy Schaich. Originally recruited to help with festival signage, Lucy began to consider ideas for thinking about "signage" in a bigger, more abstract way—something that could serve as a sign *of* the festival, in addition to having various signs *at* the festival. The result was the 2001 fabrication of the Lotus "feather banners," designed and sewn by Lucy and LuAnne



Figure 5.10: The Lotus Dickey Tribute performs in front of the 2002 backdrop at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Left to right: Paul Tyler, Nan McEntire, Janne Henshaw, Grey Larsen, Mark Feddersen, and Steven Dickey. (Photo by Kevin Atkins)

Holladay in conjunction with the activities of the Sites Committee. These 20-foot tall, two-color (orange and white) fabric banners sported the Lotus logo and were mounted on flexible poles at various points around the edges of the festival geography—on streets that were, at that time, otherwise unadorned. Although not strictly “art,” the banners were later adopted by the Visual Arts Committee and were still in use in 2005, and more and more of these feather banners were been created over the years. Although some

members of the early Visual Arts Committee found the banner design “boring,” with only two colors and a logo,¹³ Lucy recalled that:

The first year with the feather banners [was] the first year the festival grounds became a venue as well . . . that it really became more than just these barricades and tents and fencing. I’m not an artist, but I’m very visual, and I remember looking at the festival and feeling like “ughh, this doesn’t really do it for me . . . I know fantastic stuff is going on in those tents and in those venues, but it’s not all tied together, this isn’t dressed up enough to be a festival.” So the feather banners were the starting point, and then more people got together and starting thinking about bigger ideas . . . how we can bring art to this new venue that is the grounds. (Lucy Schaich, personal interview)

The backdrop project and the inspiration of the feather banners together helped move the conception of the visual at the Lotus Festival in a new direction at the turn of the twenty-first century. In collaboration with Lee and festival staff, the Visual Arts Committee adopted some new mandates: “art on the street” and “taking art to the people.” Lucy described the underlying philosophy of the new approach as

. . . not limit[ing] it to people who have to go into the gallery, because entering the gallery is making a decision to go see art, and many people don’t think of themselves in that way. It’s like turning the gallery inside out...people don’t have to decide to go through that door, and instead the gallery becomes the street . . . art where people are. It’s *not* opt-in...it’s like we’re forcing them to experience it. (Lucy Schaich, personal interview)

In practical terms, realization of the revised mandate involved treating the street area as a “canvas to paint on,” resulting in visual elements that were not only outdoors but were also “bigger, brighter, and more interactive” (Lucy Schaich and Lee Williams, personal interviews). Lucy referred to an emphasis on the experiential, noting that “nobody on the

¹³ Lucy emphasized that this was more of a joke than a put-down, noting that this dissatisfaction inspired one local textile artist to offer to create the vivid multi-colored fabric flags that first graced the Lotus street parades in 2004.



Figure 5.11: The Lotus feather banners, 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

committee wants to be involved in art that stagnates or art that's just to be looked at and treated as precious or not to be touched" (Lucy Schaich, personal interview). A

terminological shift also accompanied this new approach. Even though the committee continued to call itself “Visual Arts,” in their discourse they adopted the term “visual splendor,” in an effort to distance themselves from traditional definitions of “art” and to avoid the exclusion of people who don’t necessarily identify as “artists.” The new term allowed them access to a broader way of thinking about the street area—encompassing not only art installations but also transforming streets through the use of movement, color, signage and banners, and lighting.



Figure 5.12: Art in the street during the 2004 Lotus Festival. (Photo by LuAnne Holladay)

Examples of the new visual components at Lotus that resulted from the adoption of the new mandate included signage geared towards making a grand visual impact (such as giant, 24-foot banners emblazoned with the Lotus name and logo, as well as more of the orange and white feather banners to mark the festival periphery), large-scale sculptural installations, and light projections onto the sides of downtown buildings and churches (these typically used a gobo to project images of the Lotus flower logo, but one year they also projected a compilation of film clips from past festivals). In terms of interactive components, the greatest amount of energy was devoted to the street parades and their accompanying flags, banners, and hand-held art items (i.e., decorated hoops, puppet-like figures and faces, and even a large Chinese dragon); and installations of “altars” made by local artists or other creative contributors.¹⁴

The street parades evolved from a desire within the Visual Arts Committee to incorporate movement and interactivity into the conception of art at the festival, as well as to provide a linkage with the sonic elements that dominated participant experiences at the festival. Temporally positioned in the breaks between performance sets, the parades were conceived as including both visual and aural components; in the first year, they used homemade shakers to provide percussive sound, but in later years they worked with Lee to use festival artists to lead the parade and provide music. While even the earliest parades were oriented towards mass participation and invited everyone to process rather than limiting non-producers to an audience role, the 2004 parades represented a new level

¹⁴ Lucy emphasized to me that one of the Visual Arts Committee goals is to attract people who might not self-identify as “artists” (Lucy Schaich, personal interview).

of participation with the introduction of multi-colored flags. Designed to create an effect of a rainbow of color in the street, 500 of these flags were lovingly hand-stitched together



Figure 5.13: The Lotus logo, projected onto the front of the First Christian Church. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

by local textile artists and distributed for marchers to carry; their popularity as visual elements quickly made these flags and their triangular shapes emblematic of the Lotus Festival in general.¹⁵

The idea of altar installations first emerged in 2002, when a local artist was asked to provide an installation for a 10'x10' tent space and wound up creating an “altar to Lotus.” In collaboration with Visual Arts Committee members, this altar became interactive as slips of paper were provided for people to [write down their thoughts](#) and tuck them into the altar wherever seemed appropriate. Lucy remembered that they’d “all been hearing comments and conversations about all this energy and joy on the street, so the idea was to give people a place to put that, to encourage people to leave their thoughts there” (Lucy Schaich, personal interview). With this component, the focus consequently shifted from the individual artist to a celebration of the festival more generally, as illustrated in the comments left on the site.¹⁶ The success of the 2002 altar prompted a concerted effort to continue the practice in successive years, with the committee soliciting altar applications according to an annual theme;¹⁷ projects have included traditional memorial altars (to a local artist who recently passed away), as well as installations that variously interpreted the festival experience. While not all of these have been participatory in the sense of people leaving written thoughts as in 2002, the committee continued to conceive of the altar projects as interactive art on the basis of their outdoor location and the cultivation of submissions from the general community.

¹⁵ These flags also caused some problems, as participants were not clear about needing to return them when the parade was over. See Chapter 3 for the Visual Arts discussion during the 2004 debriefing meeting.

¹⁶ Lucy collected the 2002 comments into a single document, which is available in the Appendix.

¹⁷ The theme for 2005 applications was “Wheels of Change.”



Figure 5.14: The first Lotus altar, 2002. (Photo by Gerry Girman)

Arts and Affect

Within the spatially-centered theoretical perspective that forms the basis for this study, I would like to suggest two different ways for thinking about the potential affect of these deliberate, large-scale spatial transformations enacted by the activities of the Visual Arts Committee—two ways in which visual elements contributed to the definition and festivalization of space in downtown Bloomington. The first involves the transformed spaces in a very general way and has to do with the ways in which festival producers and participants described the experience of festival space in contrast to the everyday,

“normal” experience of the same physical area. Lee once talked about the visual arts component of the festival “transforming what you’re used to into something strangely appealing”; other long-time festival participants noted that “during Lotus, things feel different . . . everyday life is suspended” or that “you think about downtown Bloomington differently” (quoted in Holladay 2005:94, 90). The description provided by one particularly articulate consultant clearly reflected this sentiment, which I heard frequently throughout my research:

Those streets that are *so* familiar to me, when I’m constantly on foot or on a bike, were really transformed . . . I really felt like it was a different place. I know 5th and 6th Streets like the back of my hand, but I was quite disoriented. When I rode my bike into town on my way to work on Sunday [the day after the festival], I felt like there had been magic there, like a Camelot feeling. (Yaël Ksander, personal interview)

This consultant also described the reaction of her young daughter, with whom she had attended part of the festival; at the time, the child was not quite two years old and her language skills were just developing. When they went for evening walks downtown in the first few days after the festival, as they approached the square and Kirkwood Avenue her daughter began to say things like “Parties? Dance? Flag?”—clearly associating the spaces with the visual festival elements (flags) and festival affects (party) that had been there in the previous nights.

These comments by participants used language which invokes, with startling specificity, a theoretical framework introduced earlier in this dissertation, namely Yi-Fu Tuan’s perspective on the relationship between space and place on the grounds of familiarity and valuation. To provide a brief review of the basic concepts discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, Tuan’s arguments revolve around the primary idea that there is an experientially-based and mutually-defining relationship between “space” and “place”

and that “what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value” (Tuan 1977:6-7). This valuation begins with the process of objectification that concretizes certain spaces or landmarks in relationship to purposive action, thus differentiating points (and relationships among those points) which orient movement and perception; this orientation is conceived as familiarity and confers value on space, resulting a sense of “place.” In other words, familiarity and valuation derive from the “identification of significant localities . . . and landmarks,” as well as the experiential establishment of a pattern or grid of these significant/valued sites. The modes of experience that can effect this objectification and transformation from “space” to valued “place” include the sensorimotor, tactile, visual, and conceptual (Tuan 1977:12, 17-18, 136).

In Chapter 3, I used Tuan’s ideas as the foundation for an exploration of the way Lotus producers created a particular festival geography by functionally dis- and re-locating everyday perceptions of centers and boundaries. I would like to expand that argument here and suggest that Lotus Festival visual art elements further contributed to the construction of festival space and the mobilization of festivalized spatial affect via partial transformations of familiar spaces that functionally disoriented participant spatial skills and symbol-referent, object-oriented concretions of value that were the basis for familiarity—thus literally creating a space that is NOT place. This was clearly illustrated in Yael’s comments contrasting her everyday apprehension of a well-known area with her perception of it during the festival, not only as “festival space” but also as a space that was *not* Bloomington—a “different place”—suggesting a re-assignment of spatial value. However, the fact that this transformation and dis-place-ment (so to speak) was partial

rather than total is evident in the ways both she and her daughter both felt a lingering affect—their perceptions of festival space involved the linkage of festival affects with physical-spatial cues that continued to exist after the festival was over. For example, Yael was able, on a certain level, to remain conscious of the fact that the festival space was still Bloomington (albeit Bloomington transformed), as evidenced by her ability to recognize the space she rode her bike through on Sunday as the same space in which the festival had occurred the night before. Likewise, her daughter cued holding flags and dancing in the parade to the space of the square and Kirkwood, recalling these memories only as she found herself kinesthetically in the same space a few nights later. Even the earlier participant comment that “everyday life is suspended” suggested that the festival experience reoriented and re-valued what was familiar, rather than replacing or eradicating it—a process of juxtaposition and ambiguity, rather than complete transformation, which resulted in a perception of place that was “not-not-here.”

That visual arts elements were designed to contribute to this spatial liminality and influence what participants perceive as festival space was evidenced in the shift in goals for the Visual Arts Committee and the new mandates which emphasized art in the street (over art in the gallery) and the idea of bringing art to the people in a way that forced mandatory sensory participation rather than opt-in gallery visits. These changes suggested a felt need to festivalize the spaces that people were already using to participate in the event, rather than to create new spaces, and the idea of using the streets as a “canvas” further implied the use of an existing landscape as the starting point. Specific visual art elements help to illustrate how these intentional juxtapositions created ambiguity and liminality. For example, street parades were routed in such a way as to

bring swirls of color and sound to the corridors that participants were using to travel from venue to venue, shifting visual and aural attention and reorienting significance to the center of the street and inviting kinesthetic participation in a spatial zone that was typically forbidden and dangerous. The projection of light images onto the sides of downtown buildings and churches turned limestone walls into screens, thus blurring functional distinctions and, further, drawing the eye upwards into a potentially new visual perspective on the downtown landscape.¹⁸ A similar effect was achieved with the tall feather banners and large logo banners, which added height to everyday perceptions and created the affect of “vastness” cited by many participants.

In addition, the intentional affect of these visual components was highlighted by Lucy’s comment that one goal of the new mandate for Visual Arts was to create “common experiences for festival attendees,” rather than opt-in shows (Lucy Schaich, personal interview). This realization of this goal in the street areas emphasized the perception of these zones as common spaces—not everyone heard the same music or went into the same venues, but everyone moved through the street area at some point. By using sight and visual experiences as a method of constructing common experiences of festival in these spaces that are accessible to everyone, the visual arts elements helped concretize shared perceptions of value in these spaces. Just as Tuan places emphasis on the visual as the primary experiential mode of spatial orientation, it can be argued that the festival’s large-scale visual components were further significant in that they effected a

¹⁸ Lucy told me that in the first year of the light projections, many people missed them because they don’t typically look up. She recalled wanting to stand in the middle of the street with and be very obvious about pointing/looking upward, so that people would follow her gaze and notice the projections (Lucy Schaich, personal interview).

collective spatial reorientation wherein shared experience bolstered the legitimacy of the resultant new conceptual frameworks for re-indexing and re-valuing place. This larger-scale, communal conception of festival space and festivalized spatial affect produced the re-assignment of place on broader scale that competed effectively with conceptions of the larger objectification of “Bloomington.” Thus, through a new vision that prioritized placing visual art elements in front of as many people as possible, the activities of the Visual Arts Committee affectively created a more equitable state of spatial juxtaposition between “Bloomington” and “festival” space and so mobilized an even more powerful ambiguity and resultant sense of spatial liminality.

The second major way in which Visual Art Committee’s large-scale transformation of outdoor spaces created a particularly festivalized affect is more specific. It involves Lucy’s comment, presented earlier, about the ways in which the incorporation of visual elements effectively turned the outdoor spaces into a “new venue that is the grounds,” examined against her later descriptions of feedback the committee received about the new approach, in which people noted feeling like they were “at the festival when they [were] outside of a venue” (Lucy Schaich, personal interview). These two comments suggest that participants perceived the outdoor street space in a dual way—both as external to venues and as a venue in its own right. The perception of street-as-venue implied the experience of the street area as festivalized space analogous to the indoor performance areas. The perception of the street as a space contrastive to venues, however, suggested distinctions that were drawn on the basis of the definitions of public/private described earlier in this chapter, as well as everyday structural elements

that evoked a sense of “indoor” and “outdoor”—i.e. walls, ceilings, and doors versus streets, sidewalks, sky, and marquees.

It is possible to argue that this duality/ambiguity had a direct relationship to the festival’s visual components, in that these components were designed to index festival-ness and contribute to the extrapolation of festival affect from the indoor venues into the external areas.¹⁹ That some participants experienced the outdoor spaces *as* venues (via visual elements) suggests that they perceived the street spaces as *performance spaces*, with the art elements playing an active, performative role in the redefinition of space. This fits well with theories about performance as an aesthetically-marked mode of communication (see Bauman 1992a), and I would suggest that the Lotus Festival visual art elements were designed to play both a communicative and meta-communicative role in the experience of festival space. In addition to using color and form to reference things like the Lotus organization (via projections or images of the Lotus logo) or to index modes such as play and celebration, the visual components of the festival also provided a larger meta-communicative framework within which interpretation of the outdoor spaces (and the activities therein) occurred within a certain range of festival referents and festival discourse.

For example, the feather banners or installations such as the 2003 Gateway Arch marked boundaries in a way that was affectively analogous to entry into a venue, suggesting that movement past these signs was movement into a different kind of space, just as movement into a venue cued particular frames of reference in anticipation of a particular kind of experience therein. The incorporation of the Lotus logo on the feather

¹⁹ This claim would seem to be supported by the fact that indoor installations such as stage backdrops formed the basis for the development of a new and specific kind of outdoor presence.

banners provided an additional cue that symbols in new space should be interpreted accordingly as “Lotus space” which had been discursively linked to such notions as inclusion, discovery, connection, and celebration of diversity.



Figure 5.15: Banners align with barricades on Kirkwood to mark the boundaries of festival space in 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Additionally, whereas in everyday life parades are typically instruments of display and have barriers or spatial separation between those who are parading and those who are watching, Lotus Festival parade organizers passed out banner and encouraged everyone to spontaneously join in. The disbursement of art elements to all and the lack of a clear parade/audience boundary created cues for the interpretation of Lotus street

parades according to the same principles of “belonging” and participation (either emotionally or kinesthetically, such as dancing) that participants described feeling inside performance venues, and these efforts also dramatized the discourse of “community.” A final example is the use of the generic form of “altar” as a mode of artistic or visual participation. The discursive labeling of these installations as “altar,” as well as the positioning of these installations inside tents which separated the participant visually from the street activity, provided a framework that indexed the churches that were part of the festival experience. Just as Chapter 4 described the ways in which the church-as-venue cued pseudo-religious frames of reference which inflected participant interpretations of experiences within that space, the construction of outdoor “altars” cued an analogous frame which suggested the interpretation of the installations’ symbolic meanings within a discursive index of reverence, intimacy, and spiritual engagement.

These examples suggest that visual elements not only marked festival space, but also provided a sort of meta-communication—communication about how to “read” the symbolic vocabulary within that space. That these frames seemed analogous to those invoked or described in indoor venues is an illustration of the ways in which Lotus Festival “visual splendor” blurred the boundaries of indoor/outdoor and created an ambiguous street space that is both venue and not-venue. Juxtaposition of these elements which referenced specific festival affects onto everyday outdoor spaces served to partially negate the structural cues denoting separation and the everyday affect of the downtown landscape, contributing to an affect of ambiguity that helped define a broader conception and experience of “festival” space.

The Final Phase: Lotus Festival 2005

Introduction

Staged in downtown Bloomington during the last weekend of September 2005, the 2005 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival was the culmination of a year of planning and deliberate decisions. Treating the weekend as the final stage in a longer process, this chapter will begin by describing the activities which occurred in the weeks just prior to the festival, and then shift to providing an overview of the different components and activities, which comprised the actual festival event, including information about the artists, venues, and festival schedule. The second half of the chapter will then engage in a theoretical analysis which revisits some of the issues explored in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, using data gathered from interviews with festival attendees¹ as well as various post-festival production wrap-up meetings. Emphasis in this latter section will be on following these production issues—use of churches as venues, the new outdoor street stages, and

¹ Unless otherwise attributed, consultant quotes used in this chapter were gathered from anonymous interviews and so will not be accompanied by citations.

the role of the Lotus “street scene”—through to the actual event, exploring in a summarized form how and to what degree producer expectations and my own ideas about space and spatial affect that emerged during the production process were either borne out, enriched, or problematized via producer and attendee experience at the festival itself. The analysis will also put forth some fresh issues and areas of spatial theoretical significance that emerged from on-site research, in terms of the topic areas and the festival as a whole.

Countdown to Festival: The Final Months, Weeks, and Days

By early August, the booking process was largely complete and Lotus volunteer committees were meeting regularly. The period of August and September was the most intense in terms of volunteer and staff activity, as plans that were debated earlier in the summer now moved into the phases of material procurement, staffing, and execution. In addition, volunteer needs and schedules were finalized, and all shifts were staffed from the mountains of volunteer applications that had flooded into the Lotus office. Even at this late stage, however, most staff and volunteers were engaged in activities that pertained to the construction of various festival sites—venues, stages, artist hospitality areas, volunteer headquarters, barricaded streets, post-festival party locations—that were dictated by the framework of “music festival” in general rather than being driven by a sense of specific artists.² This further underscores the extent to which space and spatial concerns dominated the production process, rather than programming. In fact, most of the

² By this time, a basic list of artists had been made public, first and briefly at the Summer Night of Lotus concert in early July, and then later in the pocket guide available at ticket sale outlets. The majority of production participants were not involved in or privy to the booking process, and so their knowledge of the artist roster was the same as the basic outline that had been given to the public.

artist-specific aspects of production were managed by either Lee Williams or the part-time Festival Production Assistant who was hired in mid-summer as the primary artist liaison (I held this position in 2005).

The Festival Production Assistant worked directly with Lee Williams and LuAnne Holladay to compile publicity, transportation, scheduling, and technical details pertaining to the artists' visits to Bloomington. Using email, phone, and postal mail to communicate with artists and artist managers/representatives, the first priority (chronologically) was to gather and distribute artist publicity materials to local media outlets, for use in promoting the festival. These included artist biographies; promotional photographs; promotional CDs of the artist's latest material; and DVDs, videos, or posters if available.³ At the same time, arrangements were also being made regarding [artist transportation](#) and [housing](#). In 2005, about half of the performing groups drove themselves to Bloomington, while the other half arrived by air (or bus, in one case) into Indianapolis (about 50 miles north of Bloomington). Most of these travel plans were made or confirmed at the last minute, and it was the responsibility of the Festival Production Assistant to track these itineraries, make travel suggestions, and make the appropriate arrangements for transportation between points of arrival and local hotels. Personnel lists were also gathered for each group in order to arrange for lodging and access name tags; artists were housed either at the downtown Courtyard by Marriott hotel or at another hotel called A Summerhouse Inn, located about 3.5 miles from the downtown area.⁴

³ Later in the process, artists sent CDs to be offered for sale at the festival. Some artists sent these in advance, but many brought their CDs with them and personally delivered them to the Merchandise Tent.

⁴ In spite of the new-for-2005 plan to use the downtown hotel as a way to integrate artists into the downtown landscape, the large personnel lists for each group ultimately necessitated the use of a second (Footnote continued on next page)

The second half of the Festival Production Assistant's responsibilities involved collecting and managing all technical and backline requirements for each performing group, as well as, in conjunction with Lee, scheduling all soundchecks and radio interviews and finalizing artists' total schedules, including performance times. In the case of technical requirements, [artist technical riders](#) were gathered from performers or representatives—these contained a list of requests for what needed to be available on the venue stage in order for the artists to successfully perform. Artists would typically send a stage plot, a list of required inputs and monitors for sound, a list of required microphones, a list of requested personnel,⁵ and a list of “backline”—the equipment that an artist required but would not be bringing, and that the festival/venue was expected to provide (usually amplifiers, drum sets or other large percussion, chairs and stools, or large instruments such as acoustic basses or keyboards). In addition to gathering all of this information and passing it along to local venue representatives, the Festival Production Assistant was also responsible for the procurement and delivery of [backline equipment](#)—staffing a backline crew; borrowing gear from local musicians, schools, or retail outlets; and plotting its movement to and from the appropriate venues at the appropriate times. In more than one case, it was also necessary to negotiate with artist representatives when certain technical needs could not be met, due to limitations of festival spaces. For example, one group sent a [stage plot](#) listing almost 30 microphones and an elaborate list of monitor speakers; while this arrangement could be accommodated in the Buskirk-

hotel. With a few exceptions, groups with their own transportation were assigned to the farther hotel, while groups without their own transportation were housed downtown.

⁵ Tech personnel usually referred to sound and/or lighting engineers. Most artists used the engineers provided by the festival at each venue, but some artists traveled with their own sound/lighting personnel.

Chumley Theater, Lotus requested that the group scale down their technical needs for their performance in one of the church venues. As technical needs became known, Lee also handled the hiring of venue sound engineers.

Scheduling was one of the last items to be finalized in the production of the 2005 festival. An attempt was made to provide all artists with a soundcheck at each of their performance venues, where the musicians set up as if to perform and worked with sound engineers to test all microphones and monitor speakers to ensure appropriate levels for the performance. It was a complicated business to schedule soundchecks, as timing depended on such disparate aspects as when an artist was planning to arrive in Bloomington, the complexity of their stage plot and technical needs, the number of artists needing to soundcheck at a given venue, and the order of performances at that venue.⁶ Further, if an artist was performing at more than one venue, they were (ideally) soundchecked at *each* venue. Artists for whom it was not possible to schedule a soundcheck were permitted to do a short “linecheck” immediately prior to their performance. Last-minute changes to the performance schedule could have a huge impact on soundcheck scheduling, as in 2005 when the Spanish contemporary flamenco group, Mártires del Compás cancelled their tour one week prior to the festival due to difficulties procuring visas for two band members. In order to fill the spaces left suddenly open in the festival schedule, Lee shifted five other bands around to patch the holes in a way that still kept bands in “appropriate” venues (see Chapter 4); this resulted in significant soundcheck schedule changes, only days before the festival began. Once

⁶ In performance situations with multiple groups on the roster, it is common practice for groups to soundcheck in reverse order, so that the group with the first set actually soundchecks last. This permits artists and venue personnel to leave the stage set-up intact for the first performance.

schedules were finalized, a few weeks or even days prior to the event, the Festival Production Assistant communicated the final itinerary to the artist or artist representative in the form of an [advance information packet](#).

One final component of artist scheduling had to do with filling not only physical festival spaces but also Bloomington sonic spaces. Since the inception of the festival, the local community radio station WFHB has been deeply involved with Lotus, and Program and Music Director Jim Manion saw WFHB's role as "familiarizing the community of listeners to the sounds of Lotus artists, creating auditory familiarity . . . while print media provides good promotion for Lotus, nothing beats hearing the music!" (Jim Manion, personal interview). WFHB volunteer programmers began incorporating music by Lotus artists into their shows in the weeks prior to the festival, but the climax of WFHB involvement has always occurred on the Friday of the festival weekend. Jim called this day "Lotus Day," where programmers played *only* music by Lotus artists—usurping everything except the news. In addition, on Lotus Day the station has always invited as many Lotus artists as possible into the studio for live interviews and short in-studio performances.⁷ LuAnne Holladay describes the scene:

After weeks of scheduling, interviewer research, and listening to stacks of CDs, the station has become a small Babel of unscripted talk and music. For eight hours, WFHB's small studio repeatedly fills, empties, and refills with musicians who spend a whirlwind fifteen minutes with sound engineers they've never met and interviewers who may not speak their language. Everyone communicates as best they can, through interpreters, with gestures, or just by playing . . . In the hall outside the soundproofed studio, musicians brush shoulders and instrument cases as they come and go: French-Algerian rai meets Texas swing; Louisiana follows Tibet.

⁷ A few interviews were also aired on Thursday, prior to Thursday performances. While Jim and WFHB staff preferred to conduct in-studio interviews, in special circumstances they arranged for phone interviews to be pre-recorded and then aired on Lotus Day. Local NPR-affiliate station WFIU also pre-recorded and aired at least one phone interview with a 2005 Lotus artist.

Gnawa trance music from Morocco or ancient Buddhist chants drift out across a southern Indiana landscape. The day is studded with unscripted acoustic treasures. (Holladay 2005:48)

As such, the sonic space of the Bloomington airwaves was transformed even before the festival began. Through discussions among Jim, Lee, and the Festival Production Assistant, these interviews were painstakingly selected, scheduled, and confirmed—the final piece of the pre-festival puzzle, and an important component of artist movement through festival space.



Figure 6.1: Jim Manion conducts an interview with the Gangbé Brass Band in the WFHB studio space, 2002. (Photo by Kevin Atkins)

The 2005 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival

The 2005 Lotus Festival event came to life September 22-25, 2005, and featured 30 different performing groups in eight venues⁸ over the course of those four days. Performance sites included two outdoor street stages, one theater, one nightclub/bar, three churches, and a public park; nine different city blocks were closed to traffic.

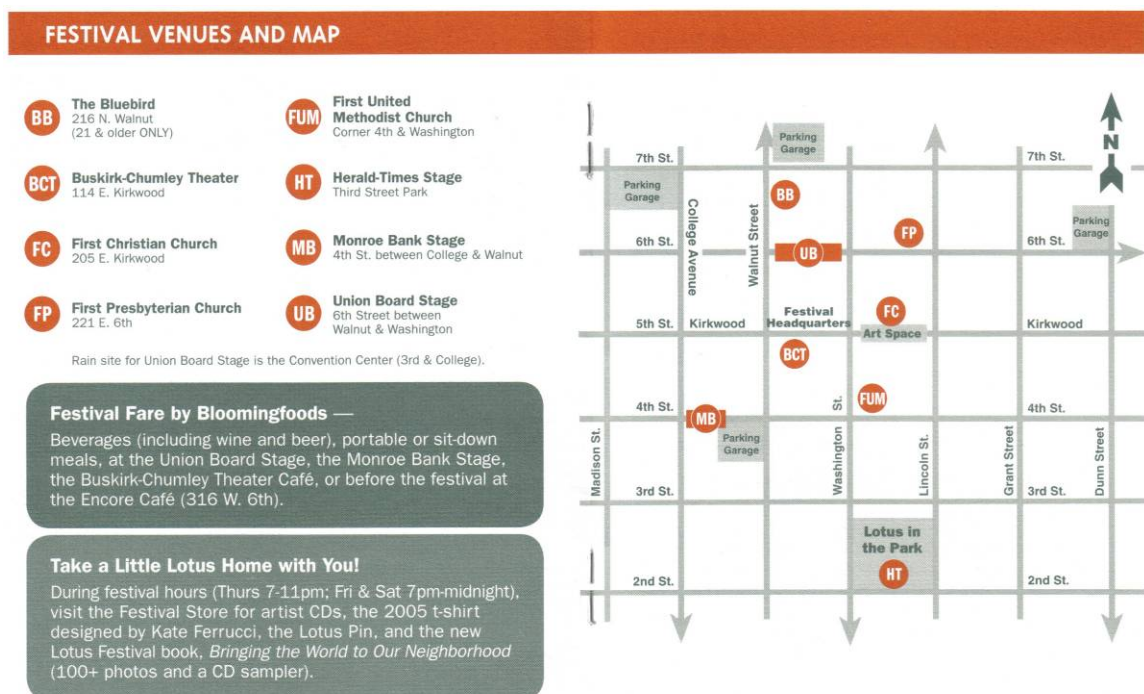


Figure 6.2: Venue map, 2005 Lotus Festival.

An estimated 6,225 people attended the festival, with a Friday/Saturday audience totaling 5,820 (5,074 with paid tickets, the rest with complimentary tickets or as volunteers); total ticket revenue for 2005 was \$150,190. The festival began on Thursday night with a separate-ticket concert at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, featuring Canadian folk trio The

⁸ Number includes seven evening venues and the *Herald-Times* stage at the afternoon Lotus in the Park event.

Wailin' Jennys and blues artist Ruthie Foster in a double-bill called "Women's Voices."⁹ Later that evening, the "pin gets you in" show began on the 6th Street/Union Board Stage, a performance by Puerto Rican *plena* artists Plena Libre that was "free" to anyone wearing the new collectible Lotus Pin.¹⁰ After this rousing introduction, the festival-proper kicked into high gear beginning on Friday evening, with ticket-only performance showcases on seven stages from 7:00 pm until midnight; these showcases were led off by a 6:00 pm Sacred Harp singing school workshop on Kirkwood Avenue in front of the



Figure 6.3: Tim Eriksen leads a Sacred Harp singing workshop on Kirkwood, across the street from the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. (Photo by Kevin Atkins)

⁹ Thursday-only tickets cost \$10, and 331 tickets were sold; total estimated audience on Thursday was 405.

¹⁰ The Wailin' Jennys, Ruthie Foster, and Plena Libre performed only on Thursday night, not to be repeated during the Friday and Saturday showcases.

Buskirk-Chumley Theater. Divided into roughly three blocks of performances, the showcases were punctuated by half-hour breaks during which street parades, free and participatory for the general public, criss-crossed the festival landscape led by a Ghanaian group called the Kusun Ensemble. One venue, the Bluebird nightclub, was also scheduled to operate during these breaks.

After a late night on Friday, the next set of festival events began at Third Street Park at noon on Saturday. This new “Lotus in the Park” event was sponsored by the City of Bloomington, with a workshop tent (the “Global Education Pavilion”) sponsored by Indiana University. Free to the public and geared towards families, this site featured four performing artists on a central stage (including the annual Lotus Dickey Tribute), alternating with workshops by festival artists, art activities tents, and a children’s parade. When Lotus in the Park concluded at 5:45 pm, a symbolic “Lotus Arts Procession” paraded from the Park to the Festival Headquarters area on Kirkwood Avenue; this parade was conceived by production participants as a way to symbolically “hand over” the afternoon events to the evening showcases, which began at 7:00 pm on Saturday night. The Saturday evening performance showcases, again ticket-only and lasting until midnight, were structured in the same way as those on Friday evening, with three main time-blocks of sets interspersed with free street parades. After a late-night party for artists and organizers that lasted until almost dawn, festival participants awoke on a rainy Sunday morning to attend the festival’s concluding event: the free “World Spirit Concert” at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater that featured artists Nawal (from the Comoros Islands), VOCO (an a cappella world music group based in the U.S.), and Los Gauchos de Roldán (a Uruguayan folk ensemble featuring accordion).



Figure 6.4: Lotus in the Park, 2005. Visual art elements surround the fountain in the middle of Third Street Park. (Photo by Sunni Fass)



Figure 6.5: Sarah Lee Guthrie and Johnny Irion perform during Lotus in the Park 2005. (Photo by Sunni Fass)



Figure 6.6: Participants visit an art activity tent during Lotus in the Park 2005. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

Schedule grids for Friday and Saturday are provided below, as well as the names of the 2005 Lotus artists and their generic designations as assigned by Lotus staff. Short [artist bios](#) are available in the Appendix to this dissertation and represent the same information that was available to the public on the Lotus Festival website (www.lotusfest.org).

Friday, September 23 / Schedule is subject to change.



	BB Bluebird Nightclub 21 & older only	BCT Buskirk- Chumley Theater	FC First Christian Church	FP First Presbyterian Church	FUM First United Methodist Church	MB Monroe Bank Stage	UB Union Board Stage
		Sacred Harp Singing School w/ Tim Eriksen / Festival Headquarters 6:00-6:45					
7:00 p.m.		Lura Cape Verdean song 7:00-8:30				Tlen Huicani Mexican folk music from Veracruz 7:15-8:30	King Wilkie Bluegrass 7:00-8:15
8:00 p.m.	Samarabalouf French Gypsy Jazz 8:00-9:00		Jake Shimabukuro Virtuoso Ukulele 7:45-8:30	APPEX Asia Pacific Performance Exchange 7:45-8:30	Téada Celtic traditional 7:45-8:30		
							Mamar Kassey Afro-pop from Niger
9:00 p.m.		Alkinoos Ioannidis Contemporary Greek song 9:00-10:15	Badi Assad Brazilian acoustic 9:00-10:15	Trio Joubran Palestinian oud 9:00-10:15	Frigg Contemporary Nordic Folk 9:00-10:15	Rachael Davis & Jake Armerding Contemporary American folk/acoustic 9:00-10:15	8:30-9:45
10:00 p.m.	Balkan Beat Box Electronica/world fusion 9:30-11:00						
		Sidi Goma Black Surfs of Gujarat 10:45-Midnight	Jake Shimabukuro Virtuoso Ukulele 10:45-11:30	Samarabalouf French Gypsy Jazz 10:45-11:30	Téada Celtic traditional 10:45-11:30	Creole Cowboys Cajun & Zydeco 10:45-Midnight	Funkadesi Funky world fusion 10:15-11:45
11:00 p.m.							

Kusun Ensemble / Street Parades on Kirkwood / 8:30 & 10:15

last update 9/19

Saturday, September 24 / Schedule is subject to change.



	BB Bluebird Nightclub 21 & older only	BCT Buskirk- Chumley Theater	FC First Christian Church	FP First Presbyterian Church	FUM First United Methodist Church	MB Monroe Bank Stage	UB Union Board Stage
7:00 p.m.		Sidi Goma <i>Black Suits of Gujarat</i>			Shape-Note Singing — Early American Soul	Creole Cowboys <i>Cajun/Zydeco</i>	Seu Jorge <i>Hip Brazilian samba</i>
—:15							
—:30							
—:45		7:00-8:30	Nawal <i>Songs of the Comoros Islands</i>	Frigg <i>Contemporary Nordic folk</i>	Tim Eriksen, Malcolm Daiglish, & Voco	7:15-8:30	7:00-8:15
8:00 p.m.	Samarabalouf <i>French Gypsy Jazz</i>						
—:15							
—:30	8:00-9:00						Mamar Kassey <i>Afro-pop from Niger</i>
—:45							
9:00 p.m.		APPEX <i>Asia Pacific Performance Exchange</i>	Le Trio Joubran <i>Palestinian oud</i>	Ana Moura <i>Portuguese fado</i>	Rachael Davis & Jake Armerding <i>Contemporary American folk/acoustic</i>	Balkan Beat Box <i>Electronica/world fusion</i>	8:30-9:45
—:15							
—:30	Los Gauchos de Roldán		9:00-10:15	9:00-10:15			
—:45		9:00-10:15					
10:00 p.m.	Uruguayan folk music				9:00-10:15	9:00-10:15	
—:15	9:30-10:45						Funkadesi <i>Funky world fusion</i>
—:30							
—:45							
11:00 p.m.		Nii Tettey Tetteh Kusun Ensemble <i>Ghanalan dance & percussion</i>	Nawal <i>Songs of the Comoros Islands</i>	Samarabalouf <i>French Gypsy Jazz</i>	Frigg <i>Contemporary Nordic folk</i>	Creole Cowboys <i>Cajun & Zydeco</i>	10:15-11:45
—:15			10:45-11:30	10:45-11:30	10:45-11:30	10:45-Midnight	
—:30							
—:45		10:45-Midnight					

Kusun Ensemble / Street Parades on Kirkwood / 8:30 & 10:15

last update 9/19

Before and during all of these performances and public presentations, Lotus staff and volunteers were hard at work behind the scenes, armed with two-way radios and busy with the transformation of downtown Bloomington. Starting on Thursday afternoon, set-up volunteers and coordinators arrived to block off 6th Street and erect the outdoor Union Board Stage.

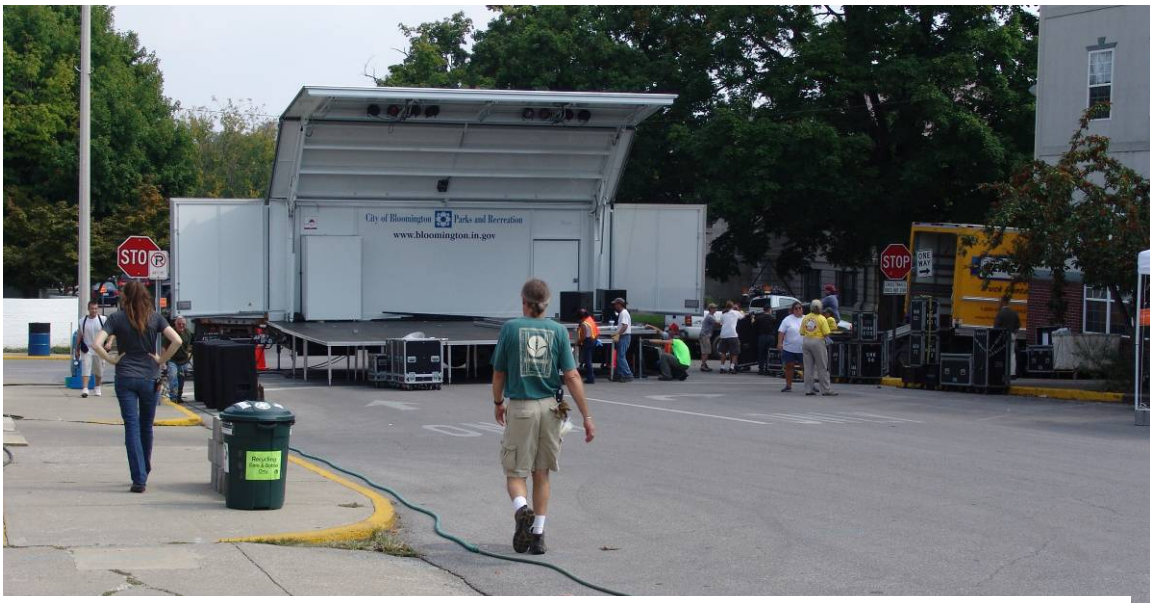


Figure 6.9: Setting up the Union Board Stage on 6th Street, in preparation for the Thursday night opening of the 2005 festival. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

On Friday afternoon crews set up the rest of the venues and outdoor spaces, including such items as tents, barricades, stages and staging extensions (for example, the extension platforms used in the churches), electricity and lighting, chairs where needed, signage, portable toilets, and trash and recycling receptacles. Meanwhile, artists were arriving in a steady stream, seeking volunteer assistance with such things as checking into the proper hotels, making their way to venues for soundchecks or to the radio station for interviews, transporting gear and personnel, and finding food, general information, and other

hospitality services. Volunteers were moved around as needed and last-minute requests were filled, ranging from the more mundane provision of extra stage carpets to a more humorous scramble to provide an artist with transportation to a local grocery store so he could purchase coconuts of just the right hardness for breaking over his head during his performance. Cell phones rang, radios crackled, production participants raced breathlessly from one urgent situation to another, and periodic jokes over the walkie-talkies kept the anxiety in perspective as a year of preparation came down to a few desperate hours. Unlike the audience experience, where the excitement began when the first notes rang out at 7:00 pm, for most production participants the start of the music was a signal that they could finally relax.

One of the most significant last-minute changes was inspired by the weather. As noted earlier in this dissertation, the plan to use outdoor, non-tent stages was accompanied by discussion of “rain sites”—indoor venues with comparable capacity into which the scheduled performances could be shifted in the event of inclement weather. Earlier in the production process, the rain plan for the 4th Street/Monroe Bank Stage involved first the John Waldron Arts Center and then later became simply the erection of a tent on the outdoor site; the rain site for the larger 6th Street/Union Board Stage was identified as the Monroe County Convention Center, located on College Avenue between 2nd and 3rd Streets. In order to facilitate the time-consuming set-up processes involved with implementing these plans, especially at the Convention Center (i.e., the construction of stages; the establishment of a P.A. and sound system and sound mixing board, as well accompanying electrical provisions; or the hanging of Lotus banners and other visual

elements), the goal was to make the weather determination by Thursday afternoon and keep the chosen set-up for the duration of the festival weekend.

With volunteers and Lee Williams riveted in front of the Weather Channel and computer radar in the days leading up to the festival, it became increasingly clear that it would rain at some point over the festival weekend; as forecasts solidified, they were able to pin it down to a 30-50 percent chance of rain, most likely on Friday evening. Lee opted to secure the Monroe Bank Stage site by simply erecting a tent there that would remain up during rain or shine, but the Union Board Stage proved more complicated. Increasingly loath to move the other, prized, outdoor street stage indoors, however, Lee made the eleventh-hour decision to implement the rain plan on a day-by-day basis¹¹ rather than make a decision that would affect the entire festival weekend. He also entertained a last-minute departure from the use of the Convention Center, leaning towards using the much smaller Second Story nightclub instead (located beside the Monroe Bank Stage site, on 4th Street between Walnut Street and College Avenue). While he ultimately opted for the Convention Center as planned, this debate illustrated Lee's strong preference for maintaining a "secure" festival perimeter of closed streets, over an increased-capacity space that would involve audiences crossing the busy, trafficked thoroughfares of College Avenue and 3rd Street.

In the end, Lee waited as long as possible to make the necessary weather-related determinations. The Union Board Stage operated outdoors as planned on Thursday evening; on Friday afternoon, as the sky was quite literally darkening and thunder was

¹¹ Lee also briefly entertained the notion of a set-by-set rain determination, but he was dissuaded by other staff and volunteers who reminded him of the immense task of moving a large band and all of their equipment and impossibility of doing so during a half-hour set break.

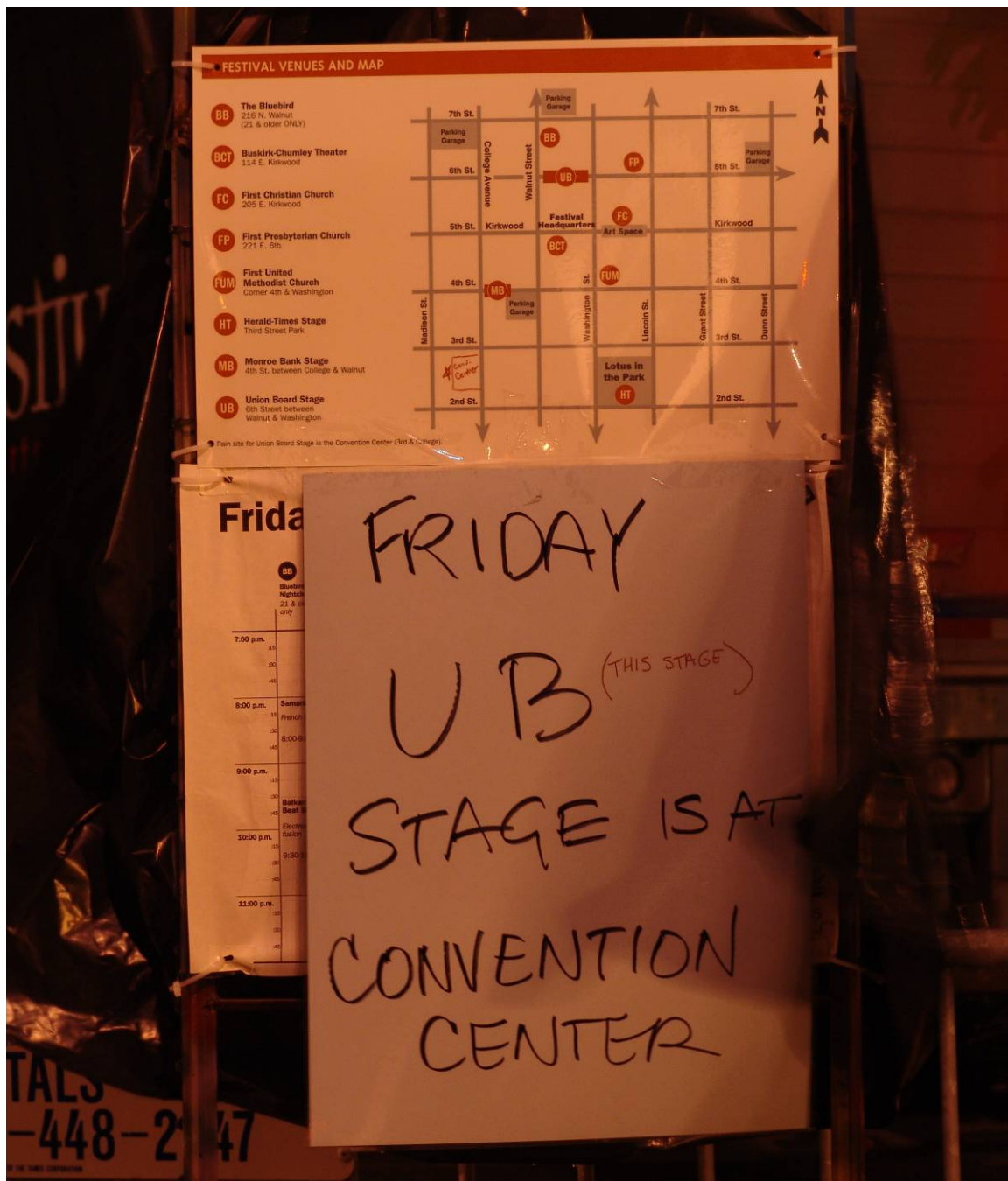


Figure 6.10: Makeshift signs announce a change of venue on the rainy Friday night of the 2005 festival. Festival maps did not include the Convention Center, which caused some audience confusion and led one festival staff member to draw the new site on the map above the sign. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

mounting in the distance, in the middle of one band's outdoor soundcheck Lee made the call for use of the Convention Center on Friday evening, sparking a flurry of set-up activity to get the indoor stage ready. This move ultimately caused some confusion for

festival-goers, as the Convention Center was not shown on any festival maps; further, while it did rain in the afternoon, the rain had stopped by 7:00 pm and so many audience members were confused by the lack of an outdoor stage. With the storm past and the radar clear for Saturday, however, performances were moved back to the stage on 6th Street for Saturday evening.¹² The affect of these shifts between indoor and outdoor spaces will be explored and analyzed later in the present chapter.

Participant Orientation: Conceptualizing Festival

One of the primary purposes of on-site festival research involved the exploration of the degree to which space and spatial considerations impacted on participant experience of the Lotus Festival. While the significance of space had already been established in terms of the production process and had been implicated by post-2004 festival interviews, the study called for a more systematic collection of data related to experience of the event itself. As such, the design for on-site research included a deliberately-worded question incorporated into all participant interviews: “What have you done so far this evening?” Unlike questions such as “where have you gone?” or “what groups have you seen?”, this open-ended query was intended to leave participants free to describe their festival activities¹³ in whatever terms felt most significant or

¹² The Saturday outdoor performances were spared, but just barely—it poured in earnest all day on Sunday. Although this did not affect the festival’s concluding World Spirit Concert, scheduled indoors at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, the weather did effectively cancel a smaller local festival that had been planned to occur on the Courthouse lawn on Sunday afternoon.

¹³ In fact, while most people interpreted this question to mean “what have you done *at the festival* so far this evening,” there were also a number of participants who expanded their evening’s activities to include things like reading the program/schedule prior to leaving the house, deciding what to wear, pre-festival dinners, their drive to Bloomington, or parking issues. Further, participant explanations tied these responses to the festival in some way, i.e. determining the best shoes for dancing, choosing a restaurant in (Footnote continued on next page)

appropriate vis-à-vis their personal experience. These responses ended up being quite revealing and, overall, confirmed the importance of space in the experience of festival.

Overwhelmingly, the majority of interviewees responded to the query “what have you done so far this evening?” by describing the venues or spaces they had visited; very, very few people used the artist names. Some participants oriented only to venue, such as the 40-year-old male who reported that:

I’ve been to the Bird [Bluebird] twice, been to the Convention Center twice, been to the Buskirk-Chumley once, been to the Monroe County tent once, and now I’m going back to the Buskirk so I can sit down.

Others oriented to a combination of venue space and some sort of performer identification. The most common form of combined orientation used spatial designations and country/ethnic identifiers, such as the 45-year-old woman who replied that

We had about ten minutes of the Mexican band in the tent, then we went to the Convention Center and got the guys from Niger, then went to the church and got the woman from Brazil . . . I didn’t have the piece of paper so I don’t remember the names . . . then we went back to the Convention Center for Funkadesi, and then the Cajun guys.

The response of another woman, aged 51, provides another good example:

The names of the groups don’t stick with me . . . first was with the beautiful dancers and performers from India in the BCT; then the First Christian Church with the three Palestinians; went to the band in the Monroe Tent; Funkadesi; went to that church right there with the amazing woman singer.

Descriptions combining local spatial reference and country/ethnic designations were by far the most frequently-received responses in these interview situations, providing strong evidence that festival participants used space and place to index their larger festival

close proximity to the festival space, etc. This range of responses suggest that studies of festival might be well-served to consider a broader definition of the total festival event—not only incorporating the planning process, as I have done, but also expanding the notion of “participation” beyond a temporally- and spatially-bounded occurrence.

experience, and vice versa. Further, the identification of these spaces by name (First Christian Church, etc.) suggests that participants were connecting performance and interpreting meaningful experience via situation in *particular* and *local* spaces and places. (However, the combined indexing of local space and geographically-distant place was also extremely significant for considering the broader implications of the present study. This topic will be explored further in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.)

Other aspects of interviewee responses were also significant in terms of thinking critically about issues of space. For example, those participants who did not use place names tended to resort to terms referencing physical-structural or structural-social typifications—"tent," "church," "theater"—that suggested orientation to particular, spatially-defined frames of reference for thinking about particular festival experiences. Responses also frequently had a kinesthetic dimension, as well, as suggested by the earlier example where the female consultant talked about going "to that church right there." Participant replies to the research query were often accompanied by gestural evidence of orientation to space and landscape—either to lived space, by pointing, looking, or turning the body in a particular direction when speaking about certain buildings or features of the downtown landscape; or to representations of space (see Lefebvre 1991), by pointing or referring to maps that were either being carried in hand or folded into an easily-accessible pocket. These gestures clearly illustrated both kinesthetic and conceptual dimensions of the experience of space (see Tuan 1977). In addition, descriptions of movement through space also had a temporal dimension, as participants almost always used words like "first" and "then" to indicate points of orientation in a

specific sequence. This would suggest that movement through the festival was conceived in terms of time and space, as participants mapped temporal festival experience onto a grid of physical location.¹⁴ The use of sequence also provided evidence that the festival was experienced relationally, as a *network* of significant spaces rather than as discrete points.

That sequence is a relational concept also has two other important implications. The first of these involves the idea that temporally-ordered, sequential movement through space effectively created the perception of proximity without the necessity of physical-spatial proximity. Temporally connecting two spaces enabled a conceptual linkage in terms of mapping orientational significance and turning space into a particular place (see Tuan 1977), and therefore contributed to a sense of an overall festival space or festival geography that might not have been conceptually equivalent to the operative idea of festival space as experienced by another participant. This orientational fluidity thus gave perceived festival space a character that was based in, yet distinct from, the physical landscape—lending festival space an infinite ordering/orienting potential that is suggestive of a liminal quality. Such a theoretical model is highly consistent with this study's fundamental premise of a “not-not-here” spatial affect.

The second implication of a sequential-relational framework involves the idea of comparison. Frequently, consultants used their responses to the research query as a forum for describing spatial characteristics or spatial affect in relation to those of other festival venues. For example, some participants accompanied a reference to a church

¹⁴ The notion of “grid” here could also be considered in reference to Mary Douglas’s idea of “grid” (vs. “group”) as a dimension of social ordering that is useful in considering relationships between structure and identity. See Douglas summarized in Fyfe and Ross (1996:134, *passim*.).

venue with an aside such as “but I prefer to be outdoors,” and other participants qualified their movement through festival space with the use of comparative explanations, as in the case of one interviewee who noted that “then we went back to the Buskirk because it was *more* comfortable and had *more* room to dance [emphases mine].” I would like to put forth here that the sense of proximity invoked via temporal sequence created a comparative framework that also had an impact on spatial affect. In phenomenological terms, the space occupied in the immediate past could be seen to have contributed to the creation of a retention (see Schutz 1976) that informed a “festival” or “festival performance” frame of reference and thus contributed to an apprehension and interpretation of affect/experience in the next occupied space. In this way, spatial affect became inherently comparative and dialogic, rather than based exclusively in temporally-immediate spatial cues. Extrapolating from other scholars who have noted the ways in which festival *performances* are often interpreted and defined vis-à-vis the other performances on the program (Cantwell 1992:295), I would like to suggest that the space undergoes the same relational interpretation.

A final point of interest that emerged from on-site investigation into modes of participant orientation to festival experience has to do with the ways in which participants named their described points of spatial reference. Consultant comments, both in response to the initial query as well as later in the interview process, frequently indexed space and place on two distinct levels. As demonstrated in earlier examples, the first of these levels was the level of familiarity and known structures. Participants referred to locations by everyday names such as “Buskirk-Chumley Theater,” “Convention Center,” or “the

Bluebird,” and many even employed shortened nicknames that indicated a high level of familiarity and comfort with these spaces—“the Buskirk” or “the Bird.”



Figure 6.11: The Bluebird, a bar/nightclub which was used as a 2005 festival venue. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

In other cases, though, and particularly when speaking about venue spaces that I have earlier set forth as having ambiguous spatial affect, participants referred to certain spaces by their “festival names.” This was the second level of naming—the indexing of transformed space. For example, when asked for their opinions about “the 6th Street stage” (in keeping with the terminology used most frequently during production), the majority of interviewees responded by inquiring “oh, do you mean the Union Board Stage?” Their ability to perceive the question as a reference to an equivalent space illustrated a cognitive awareness of physical-spatial congruence between the space known

as “6th Street” in everyday life and the space known as the “Union Board Stage” during the festival, but their need to re-frame the question in purely festival terms reflected an experiential prioritizing of space and place as conceptualized within a transformed, festival framework. This suggests a re-definition/re-valuing of space that led to identification as a different place, possibly accomplished by orientation to new points of significance (i.e. a stage, barricades, etc.) and/or to new representations of space such as festival maps (see Tuan 1977 and Lefebvre 1991). In either case, it is clear that identification and orientation occurred via recognition of a juxtaposition of the familiar and the transformed, supporting contentions of spatial ambiguity and the significance of a “not-not-here” analytical framework.

Experiencing Churches

The 2005 Lotus Festival utilized three downtown churches as venues; two of these—the First Christian Church and the First United Methodist Church—had been Lotus venues in 2004 as well, while the third—the [First Presbyterian Church](#)—had been a Lotus venue in years past but had not been used recently. All three sites were continually full over the course of Friday and Saturday evenings, and there were frequently either lines outside the church doors and/or crowds waiting, in church ante-rooms, narthexes, or lobbies, for audience members to exit between songs so that newcomers could fill the vacated pew spaces. Particularly on Saturday evening, when the weather was unseasonably hot and humid for late September, many audience members reported that their attraction to the church performances had to do with the fact that the spaces were air conditioned. Other comments supported earlier contentions that the churches were

typically non-dancing spaces, with many participants reporting being attracted to the church venues because they were tired and wanted to sit down. Several people made explicit reference to church architectural attributes, linking spatial and sonic experiences by noting that the church spaces typically had good acoustics.

In general, anonymous consultant interviews revealed a very clear sense of the churches as ambiguous space, particularly as that ambiguity pertained to juxtapositions of sacred and secular. Some participants perceived this ambiguity in ways that seemed to link spatial cues with the sense of transgression that is often cited as part of festival liminality (see Stoeltje 1992, Stoeltje and Bauman 1989, Lavenda 1992). For example, one 30-year-old male audience member remarked that

I was raised Catholic and a religious person, so I found myself taking my hat off every time I walked in the church, and that was a little odd for me, because there were other people, older than me, not doing that.

His comment reflected discomfort with the lack of observance of protocols that usually pertain to religious space, even though the space was not being used in a religious capacity during the festival. In particular, his reference to “people older than me” raised issues of experience and age as contributing to perceptions of spatial affect and attentiveness to the underlying sacred space onto which Lotus was layered. Another consultant attributed the transgressive behavior to herself, again citing spatial cues marking the space as sacred. The woman, in her 50s, remarked that she was “offended” by having musical performances in church—that she was a Christian and it made her uncomfortable. She went on to note, however, that at the same time she recognized that she herself was there, in the church and enjoying the performance: “We are all human, we make mistakes, we sin . . . I’m doing that in order to attend Lotus.” In this example,

the juxtaposition of sacred and secular space created an affect of profound ethical ambivalence and put the consultant in a liminal position of which she was highly aware; her comments also suggested that she prioritized the sacred in her perceptions of space. Even one of the performers, the percussionist for Nawal (from the Comoros Islands) talked about the “controversial” aspect of singing a Muslim prayer in a church venue.

Other participants experienced this spatial liminality in more subtle or more positive ways. One woman, age 37, also prioritized the sacred cues but in a way that credited the affect of religious spatial cues with impacting the performers’ artistic intent as well as her own perceptions of the performance vis-à-vis the venue space:

Artists in churches are really involved in what they’re doing. The performance has a bit of spirit, and God in whatever form makes the performance special and inspired. The churches are really great—calmer lighting, not so loud, and they add to the feeling that you’re witnessing something special.

An on-stage comment by one performer seemed to support this attribution. Ana Moura, a Portuguese *fado* artist, remarked from the altar of the First Presbyterian Church that “like most Portuguese people, I am a Catholic person . . . this is the perfect place to sing this song, because it says ‘I am confessing all my fears.’” Discussions of church spaces also revealed varying perceptions of the relationship of the churches to the larger festival space. Some interviewees chose to compare their Lotus experiences very directly to past experiences in church, noting that audiences seemed more attentive and animated than on Sunday mornings; they also made comments such as “it feels like the preacher’s about to come out,” “I usually go anything to get out of going to church,” and “that’s the best time I’ve had in church in a while.” These consultants seemed to be perceiving the spaces first as churches and only secondarily as secular performance venues. In contrast, other

participants chose instead to compare their Lotus experiences in church venues to their Lotus experiences in non-church venues, perhaps conceptualizing the church space in terms of its relationship to a larger sense of “festival space” rather than perceiving it primarily as religious space. These interviewees remarked, for example that audiences seemed quieter and more “subdued” in the churches, and also that the churches seemed more “intimate” than other venues; another consultant felt the churches were more “formal” than other spaces.

Many consultants noted the ways in which being in a church affected their perceptions of “appropriate” behavior, citing primarily the building and the church architecture as cues rather than past experiences, performance aesthetics, or verbal instructions. One 34-year-old male commented that “personally, I’m agnostic, but going to a church, I get all on my good behavior. So it’s hard to dance or something in a church.” Another younger woman spoke of the performance by Téada in the First United Methodist Church, noting that she felt like “everyone wanted to get up [and dance], but you had to sit . . . I guess you could dance in the aisles, but that’s not appropriate for a church.” Even my photographer complained that “I felt more restricted in the church, but I’m not sure why . . . I felt weird and inhibited with the camera, even though no one confronted me, or anything like that” (Matt Sieber, conversation). A volunteer working at the First Christian Church observed that many audience members seemed appalled when participants forgot to turn off their cell phones in the church venues or, worse, actually answered them and began talking. In contrast, this behavior went unremarked at other Lotus venues, especially the outdoor stages, which suggested that discomfort with this behavior stemmed from it being sited in particular spaces rather than from the behavior

itself. Similarly, another older man mentioned audience behavior in the churches as distinct from other venues, even when the same band was performing: “When you’re in a church, they tend to be quiet and listen . . . if you’re in the Convention Center you can have the very same act and there’s all this chatter in the background.” In other cases, spatial ambiguity resulted in an overwhelming sense of uncertainty about behavior, rather than a firm sense of what was right or wrong. For example, a consultant felt that the audience in one church “seemed apprehensive about when to clap and how to behave”; another commented that it’s “not customary to clap in church” but chose not to make a value judgment on the presence of this behavior during the festival.

As suggested earlier in this study, the presence or absence of religious symbols and religious paraphernalia seemed to have a strong effect on the degree to which church spaces were perceived as liminal or ambiguous sites. This idea was supported, in particular, by comparisons between reports and observations from the First Christian and First United Methodist Churches, and those from the First Presbyterian Church—the former two churches had crosses hanging in the altar area, while the latter church did not. In the First United Methodist Church, for example, a stage manager remarked that several performers had “expressed shock at seeing the cross that would be hanging behind them during the performance . . . they hadn’t really noticed it during rehearsal and set-up, and they felt a bit uncomfortable with it hanging behind them.” These same performers later commented to their audience that it “felt strange to play in a church.”



Figure 6.12: Frigg performs in front of the cross in the First United Methodist Church. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

However, in the next day's performance at the First Presbyterian, observers reported the same band encouraging people to dance "even though it's a church"; this suggested that the group perceived the second space as less ambiguous and licensing of a broader range of "appropriate" behavior. As another example, many consultants marveled at the behavior of Trio Joubran (the Palestinian *oud* players) during their performance in the First Christian Church—as he came onto the altar/stage, one member of the group turned, faced the cross, and crossed himself before they began to play. Another member of the group introduced their performance by remarking that "I hope God will bless everybody

and make this another beautiful concert,” and later in the performance this same artist made reference to the appropriateness of the *maqam* in which they were about to play, calling it “Byzantic” and attributing their choice of music to the fact that they were playing in a church. In contrast, the group’s performance at the First Presbyterian Church did not contain any of these verbal or gestural orientations to church space or religious spatial affect, suggesting that there was not as strong a sense of juxtaposed frames of reference.



Figure 6.13: In the First Presbyterian Church, there is no cross hanging above the altar area.
(Photo by Matthew Sieber)

It was not only the performers who seemed to modify their behavior relative to the presence or absence of religious spatial markers. Participants in the First Christian and First United Methodist Churches cited stringent restrictions on access to the sanctuary areas, with those arriving during songs kept in narthex or other ante-areas and visually, aurally, and physically separated from the sanctuary by closed narthex doors until a song had ended.



Figure 6.14: Audience members wait behind closed doors before entering the sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church during Lotus 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Further, in these churches volunteers were particularly attentive to seating patterns inside the sanctuary, actively prohibiting audience members from standing in open spaces or

sitting in aisle areas; these restrictions seemed comparable to those in effect during a church service. However, in the First Presbyterian Church, one of my research assistants commented that

The First Presbyterian Church was, by far, the most liberal with the use of space and the position of the audience within it. It seemed that this had something to do with the architecture of the church . . . The doors in First Presbyterian were sliding doors, not conventional hinged doors. I never saw the Lotus volunteers close the sliding doors completely during a performance. The people waiting in the lobby could simultaneously become part of the audience inside the sanctuary. This did not happen in the other two churches. In the First Presbyterian, people in the lobby applauded along with the rest of the audience and responded to the performance in similar ways to the audience “inside.” (Denise Dalphond, fieldnotes)



Figure 6.15: Waiting outside open sanctuary doors in the First Presbyterian Church. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Another consultant noted that she had much less trouble entering the First Presbyterian sanctuary during an ongoing performance, and that she was also able to later sit on the floor in front of the stage/altar area, a behavior that would be considered inappropriate in a space with a more pronounced sacred affect. The same consultant also noted that the audience in the First Presbyterian was more “boisterous” than in the other churches.

The next day, one volunteer commented that the altar area at the First Presbyterian Church was completely cleared and contained only speakers, microphones, cables, and chairs, making it “really just look like a stage.” Her observation and wording implied that the other two churches, where the altars were not cleared of religious paraphernalia, presented a more complex and ambiguous set of visual cues that left the front areas in a liminal position somewhere between stage and altar. In addition, several consultants cited the “unusual” architecture of the First Presbyterian Church, where the entrance to the sanctuary was off to the side of the pulpit and the pulpit did not directly face the narthex doors. I would like to suggest that this arrangement did not provide the spatial cues typical of church architecture and so, together with the absence of religious paraphernalia in the altar area, did not as clearly invoke the “church” frame of reference that created a more potent ambiguity in the other church venues. This argument is supported by evidence of more relaxed behavior that was more consistent with non-church Lotus venues.

A final point about the experience of church venues at the Lotus Festival involves a re-thinking of the issues of public and private space that were raised earlier in this study, in the context of the outdoor street stages. In contrast to those areas, where tension resulted from the plan to co-opt public space for private, exclusive use, I was surprised to

find a different type of public/private reversal operating in the church venues. Many consultants remarked on being “allowed” to enter the churches for the purposes of the performances, with comments ranging from descriptions of a lack of prior access to a particular church (“I’ve never been in here before”) to acknowledgments of a lack of experience in *any* church structure (“I’ve never visited a church before, so it’s exciting to explore an unknown place”). One interviewee felt that “they [the churches] are great. It really gives Bloomingtonians access to places they normally wouldn’t have,” suggesting a focus on audience admission. Another participant expanded this sense of permission to performers as well, commenting that “I think it’s kind of a nice thing that the churches allow them to perform there, to let the community come in and listen to music there.”

Consistent with other scholars’ observations about “reversal” as a component of festival liminality (see Stoeltje 1992, Stoeltje and Bauman 1989, Lavenda 1992), these participant remarks suggested a shared perception of the churches, during non-festival times, as sites of exclusive access where the right of entry was limited to those with membership or a particular demonstrated religious/denominational affiliation. Unlike the outdoor street venues, where tension resulted from the privatization of public space, in the church venues a sense of the reversal of norms occurred via the publication of space perceived as more private, in terms of membership as well as, potentially, a sense of worship or devotion as a more private, internalized experience. It is possible to argue, therefore, that the temporary reversal of the norms of spatial access and a sense of transgression of everyday boundaries might also have contributed to a heightened liminal affect in these spaces.

Lotus on the Street: Street Scene and Visual Arts

The 2005 Lotus Festival “street scene” was comprised of the “Festival Headquarters” area on Kirkwood Avenue in front of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, the designated Visual Arts area on Kirkwood near the intersection of Washington Street, the closed block of Walnut Street between 4th Street and Kirkwood, and all of the closed streets, corridors, and alleyways outside of and connecting the various performance venues.



Figure 6.16: The Buskirk-Chumley Theater during set-up, 2005. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Ostensibly a “non-venue” space in the sense of being all-access, the Lotus street scene was nevertheless still perceived and experienced as “festival space” in a number of ways.

Particularly on Kirkwood Avenue outside of the Buskirk-Chumley, the closed streets provided sites for participants to gather and socialize, purchase festival tickets and merchandise, observe or participate in street parades, view art elements on display outside and within free-access tents, or purchase and consume food from local vendors on the closed streets.¹⁵

Many festival participants acknowledged that the closure of downtown streets to vehicle traffic enabled an affect that was distinct from the everyday experience of that area of Bloomington. Some people reported feeling a sense of dislocation from place—"I felt like I left and was in some other place completely"—while others reported a sense of doing something illicit: "I couldn't get over the thought all night that this was usually a main drag through town, and how liberating it was to be able to walk in the middle of the street"; "we were speaking as we were coming down here that 'Let's walk in the middle of the street because the only other time we'll get to do this is when there's a big snowstorm every 15 years.'"; "you don't get to walk in the streets just any day!"; and "I saw some kids racing each other down the middle of the street . . . relishing the opportunity to be in the middle of the road." All of these comments reflected a sense of transgression from everyday norms, an affect that is consistent with the idea of liminal space and supports arguments made earlier in this study.

Other participant experiences of the closed streets also supported this study's operative framework concerning the role of the familiar in enabling the perception of heightened or liminal affect. Most significantly, several consultants reported feeling as if

¹⁵ Food and beverages offered by Bloomingfoods under the auspices of "Lotus" were only available from concession areas contained within the boundaries of ticketed venues. Outside of the venues, food and drink were only available from non-festival-affiliated vendors.

the partial transformation of space—the removal of traffic and the erection of new spatial boundaries—actually *drew* attention to elements of the existing local landscape and enabled new ways of orienting to an ostensibly familiar space. One couple called it “a great opportunity to view your city from a completely different vantage point,” while another woman emphasized the “excitement of walking by something you might not ordinarily stop for.” Yet another consultant spoke of the affect being

. . . a lot more intimate, because they have the roads closed off . . . it’s a lot more for pedestrians, more open to people to be able to enjoy the flavor of the city or town itself and not have to worry about the traffic. Kind of gives it a European-type village feeling, because you don’t have the interference of vehicles that will run you over . . . a nice feeling, the freeness to wander and talk, and watching the people . . . because I didn’t have to worry about the traffic, I really did notice the architecture and the local flair you might miss in the everyday pace of things.

Several other participants also used the word “intimate” to describe the affect of the closed streets, suggesting a close relationship between perceptions of space and social experience. This is highly consistent with the ideas of scholars such as Yi-Fu Tuan and his ideas about the impact of socially-oriented experience on the experience and conceptualization of physical-sensory space (see Tuan 1977).

In contrast, however, many other participants seemed to feel that the street closures were not enough to bring a sense of coherence and united the non-venue spaces as “festival space.” Several interviewees perceived the festival as being “all indoors this year!” in spite of the outdoor street stages, suggesting that intermediate spaces were not experienced as part of festival space. Many audience members reported feeling like “things are more spread out, it doesn’t feel as cohesive,” and one participant noted that “every time I’ve been in a concert I’ve felt like I have to think about where I’m going next, and how to map it out . . . it seems harder.” Another interviewee noted that “I really

don't know where the venues are, because it's not obvious . . . I had to look for them!"

and one woman reported that

To me it seems a little disjointed, and I've been to a lot of them . . . it's confusing for me to figure out where to go! If you were here for the first time, I think it would be kind of daunting to figure out where to go. I think they should have the stages on Kirkwood, as many as they can, and keep it closer together.

This woman's comment reveals what most audience members cited as the explanation for the perceived lack of coherence in festival space: the lack of a music tent on Kirkwood, as in past years. Drawing an explicit connection between sound and the unification of festival space, one consultant remarked that

They used to have isolation because of the inside venues, but at least they had one thing outside, where you felt like you were part of something big happening. But you can't hear music now, and it's a central location. Music transforms the space.

Another long-time festival-goer also commented that "One thing we noticed is that here in the center, there's less sound . . . and it feels a little bit more diffuse." These experiences of the relationship between sound and space, particularly within the framework of a music festival, lend credence to the argument, made earlier in this dissertation, that outdoor elements that indexed festival-ness contributed to the extrapolation of festival affect from the indoor venues into the external areas. Without these cues, the outdoor space was perceived as less "festivalized" and therefore less unified with the layout of indoor venues.

Further, it is significant that the outdoor street stage on 6th Street did not fulfill this indexing role, even though it provided sound in outdoor spaces. As will be discussed in more detail in the next section concerning these new outdoor venues, it seemed to be not only the outdoor-ness of these past-year cues that extrapolated the festival affect, but

also the perceived public-ness of the old tent structures. Participants cited two aspects of this public-ness. First, there was frequent mention of the tent's location on Kirkwood Avenue, perceived by many (including producers) to be the festival "Main Street," a center of activity that oriented the larger festival geography. A music tent on this site integrated world music sounds with other festival structures and visual elements.

Second, for many people the ability of non-wristbanded participants to experience this music tent enhanced a feeling of *communitas* that was integral to generic event identity—without this spatial and sonic inclusiveness, many participants felt like it was no longer "festival." According to interviewees, it "lost the feeling of 'festival' in the main area, with the move to 6th Street" and that "it seemed like part of the festival element was that it was free access for everyone." Another consultant commented that he'd just arrived "and discovered that there's no longer free music outside . . . that's kind of anti-festival spirit." Some people re-located this inclusive definition of festival in the street parades, which occurred during performance breaks and were open and participatory for the public. However, despite feeling like the parades partially determined festival space by filling sonic space and mobilizing inclusion in central areas, most participants noted that the affect was temporally limited. All of these remarks provided evidence that the construction of "festival space" involved more than just marking boundaries (i.e. barricading streets), a further argument for the inclusion of spatial issues in festival theory suggested in the introduction to this study.



Figure 6.17: The Kusun Ensemble leads one of the 2005 Lotus street parades. (Photo by Brian Garvey)

Interestingly, primary festival producers also noticed this diffusion and lack of coherence in the non-venue “street scene” space, but attributed it to different causes, although still causes that were spatially oriented. In particular, many production participants, including those who were members of the Visual Arts Committee, commented on the relative lack of art and visual elements at the 2005 festival event; one attendee at the festival wrap-up meeting called it “visual arts lite.” The street parades comprised the bulk of visual arts activities, with four parades over the course of Friday and Saturday that used colorful cloth banners (passed out to parade participants and then

collected again afterwards), large decorated hoops, and the vivid “Faces of Diversity”—mask-like paper-mâché faces mounted on poles, created as part of a community project spearheaded by Visual Arts Committee member Joe LaMantia.



Figure 6.18: “Faces of Diversity” was a 2005 community art project led by Bloomington artist Joe LaMantia. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

Outside of the short parades, however, there were few other visual elements. The Faces of Diversity remained on display on the street between parades, while two small tents housed altars installed by community members; these areas were very poorly lit. Beyond this small designated “Art Space on the Street” on Kirkwood Avenue between Washington and Lincoln Streets, the only other festival visual elements were the orange and white “feather banners” displaying the Lotus logo which marked the boundaries of the closed streets, and Daniel Comiskey’s memorial “1,000 Cranes” origami art installation which hung under the marquee of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. There were

also light projections of the festival logo onto downtown buildings; however, one of the projections in the central Festival Headquarters area was turned off because it was shining into the eyes of performers at the First Christian Church. Art organizers attributed the small evening visual art presence to an overextension of committee members resulting from the demands of the new Lotus in the Park event on Saturday afternoon.

In the 2005 festival wrap-up meeting, production participants cited the diminished visual arts presence as a key factor in the sense of a diffuse street scene. Unlike in past years, where visual elements had produced the affect of a “new venue that is the grounds” (Lucy Schaich, personal interview), in 2005 producers felt that the decreased visual presence decreased the sense of street-as-venue. As Lee noted,

The Visual Arts space needs to be able to be a destination point in and of itself, not just a place where people walk *through* . . . has to be sufficient in its own internal purpose, to draw someone. (Lee Williams, meeting participation)

In other words, it could be argued that the festivalized affect of the street areas depended on attention being drawn to the street as a *destination*—like a venue—rather than merely as transitional space. This analysis is consistent with the position taken elsewhere in this study that the reversal of spatial roles contributed to what was perceived as “festival space.” By re-defining the street as a place of pause rather than its typical function as a thru-way or corridor, the expected role of visual arts elements was that they should functionally re-assign new kinesthetic and perceptual skills to the street area and enable a disorientation and liminal affect that would be equated with a feeling of festival-ness.

That this did not occur as powerfully in 2005 was emphasized by production participant ideas for 2006, which focused on a re-thinking of visual art elements as a way

to “build up the street vibe” again. Significantly, the favored idea revolved around creating large puppet or sculptural installations that would be “higher than the level of the crowd, something on a larger scale that literally takes the street to a different level . . . something that engages your gaze *up*” (LuAnne Holladay, meeting participation). Such a suggestion was extremely consistent with my analysis of a production process designed to enable dis- and reorientation to the downtown spatial landscape as a strategic method for creating an identifiably “festival” affect.

Outdoor Street Stages and the Convention Center

The 2005 festival marked the first use of what producers called “outdoor street stages”—entire city blocks marked off as sites of exclusive access for people with festival ticket wristbands. These stages were located on 6th Street between Washington and Walnut Streets (the Union Board Stage) and on 4th Street in the west half of the block between College Avenue and Walnut Street (the Monroe Bank Stage). Due to the weather, the Union Board Stage was moved to the Monroe County Convention Center on Friday night only, and a tent was constructed on the Monroe Bank Stage site for both Friday and Saturday nights. Instituted largely as a solution to the 2004 issue of “freebies,” or non-wristbanded participants gathering around the outdoor tents to hear music for free, the outdoor stages were controversial even in the planning stages. Predictably, therefore, at the festival event responses to the new structure varied widely among participants and producers.



Figure 6.19: Brazilian artist Seu Jorge performs on the Union Board Stage during Lotus 2005.
(Photo by Sunni Fass)

A common initial reaction among interviewees was surprise—many felt that the new structure of the festival’s outdoor components had not been publicized, and so they arrived planning to participate in a more informal, non-ticketed experience. Some of these people made an on-site choice to purchase a wristband, while others found alternative sites for informal listening; I also observed many people *with* wristbands also opting for non-entry. According to one research assistant,

There was also a strong presence of people behind the stage, outside the Union Board venue. A small crowd congregated in front of the [Monroe County] Historical Society building [behind the stage and across Washington Street] . . . they were listening to the music as well as dancing, and some people even brought blankets and found spots on the lawn of this building to enjoy the show . . . The video (Plan 9) store didn’t

seem to have too many customers but Roots [restaurant] was full most of the night. (Yamir Gonzales, fieldnotes)



Figure 6.20: People, most without wristbands, gather behind the Union Board Stage to hear music during the 2005 festival. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

In the early parts of the evening, barricades and volunteer enforcement kept bystanders out of the alleys leading to the Union Board Stage; however, as the evening went on, enforcement became laxer and small groups of listeners gathered in the alleys. Several street residents appeared on their balconies overlooking the stage; slightly larger neighborhood groups gathered on the roof above Plan 9. However, all of these bystander groups were much smaller than the crowds around the tents in past years; in addition, the venue area itself was always extremely full with wristbanded participants.



Figure 6.21: Huge crowds fill 6th Street during Seu Jorge’s performance at Lotus 2005. (Photo by Sunni Fass)

For the most part, boundaries of the outdoor stage areas were secure, drawing a range of reactions from attendees that clearly reflected a sense of tension between public and private space. Several participants highlighted the intrinsic public-ness of city streets, with one woman noting that “you can only go so far, technically you cannot pay for this venue.” Another younger man equated “community” quite literally with the physical city streets, feeling an incongruence between the exclusive venue and the fact that “it literally involves the Bloomington community, its streets.” This latter comment provided an interesting contrast to the feelings of early festival founders who, as noted in

Chapter 2, saw the *indoor* venues as most representative of a “community” that was conceived vis-à-vis the university campus and population. That the festival had taken on a more inclusive sense of “community” in both its spatial and rhetorical framework was evidenced by the comments of other participants who related the event’s ostensibly “community” character directly to its use of space:

One of the beautiful things about it was the open stages, because it was truly a community event. The street blocking, along with other changes, has changed the atmosphere of Lotus. We donated less to Lotus this year because of the changes that were implemented . . . they didn’t lend to the community element of the event.

They don’t need to be so uptight about people who haven’t paid who stand around and listen. It was part of the community feeling, never got out of hand . . . people who couldn’t afford it could still be a part of it.

I wanted to be able to just walk around. I think it’s really a great festival and it brings a lot of people to Bloomington, and gives it a sense of community. I think that what was great about it being outside.

On the other hand, there was also a respectable showing of support for the new ticket-only structure. Producers and audience members both commented on the “great vibe” of the space, especially when it was completely full; this suggests that the feeling of *communitas* and shared experience within the venue boundaries was prioritized by some as the primary spatial affect. Others frequently cited economic factors that highlighted the relationships between ticket revenue and the event budget. One older man commented that

I think it’s fine [to block off 6th St.] . . . I think there’s been way too much freeloading, and really they only sell about 6000 tickets and that’s not that many for as big an event as this is . . . I’m OK with that.

Another woman remarked that “It’s expensive to put this on, and so I expect to pay to listen to the different things . . . it’s very professional here.” As in the latter part of that

comment, other participants also equated payment with a more positive perception of the total audience experience. For example, one interviewee noted that

Last year I came and I felt disrespect, because of the people who didn't pay but they could see the shows, listen to the music . . . there were some disturbance in the performances. This year it was little bit more elegant.

This opinion among participants—that the exclusive spatial access had a direct impact on the perceived quality of the event—was not unknown to producers. Lee had frequently made mention of this phenomenon during the production process, noting that, in the past, the Lotus Festival free events were typically not well attended because people assumed that “free” equated to “lower-quality.” In this case, the reversal of public/private spatial access norms intrinsically imbued the activities “inside” with a greater perceived value, as well as giving exchange value to (and thus concretizing) space and spatial affect.

In spite of distinct support for both sides of the public/private divide, however, it appeared that the majority of participants were highly ambivalent about issues of access. Many used the phrase “I understand, but . . .” that positioned them firmly between support and protest and, I would argue, was the clearest representation of the liminal affect enabled by the juxtapositions of public and private space in the outdoor street stage structure. The “I understand” utterance typically reflected an economic rationale, while the “but” construction usually incorporated more abstract ethical notions equating exclusion with negative affect or discomfort. For these participants, the exclusive space was highly ambiguous, and they were aware of occupying a liminal position that involved a sense of transgressive behavior, similar to the woman cited in an earlier section who embraced the Lotus church experience as a duality of enjoyment and sin. This spatial ambiguity was illustrated also in the varying responses of festival producers and

volunteers to challenges to the spatial boundaries—some, like Lee, called the entry points for 6th Street “the front line in the battle” and advocated stronger enforcement of access limitations, while other volunteers reacted to the ambiguous affect of juxtaposition by moving barricades or conspicuously not enforcing access to alley areas. Both types of response highlighted a clear awareness of negotiating an overlap between public and private rights of spatial access.

The affect of the public/private ambiguity of the outdoor street stage areas was also evident when examined in comparison to the spatial affect of the indoor venue which replaced the Union Board Stage on Friday evening—the Convention Center. Unlike the outdoor stages, where interviewees tended to consistently describe the spaces in terms referencing either *communitas* or an awareness of the controversial overlay of private and public, in the Convention Center people seemed to be having a hard time finding any consensus regarding the identification of operative frames of reference for their experience of the space. Rather than an integrated ambiguity, they identified discrete elements that either didn’t cohere, or didn’t cohere into an affect recognizable as “festival.”

For example, one consultant noticed that “too many chairs, the dance floor, and the lights made it look like a Senior Prom,” while another described the scene as:

. . . semi-traditional West African music in a Midwestern bingo hall, with chairs occupied by people who look like they belong in a Midwestern bingo hall, and college students in the middle gyrating around and doing their “I’m experiencing the culture” thing.

Many people referred in negative terms to the “ambiance” of the space, noting jarringly bright lights and corporate/industrial carpeting. Others cited the layout of the Convention

Center space and the fact that many people chose to dance in the back of the hall rather than in front of the stage.



Figure 6.22: Inside the Convention Center during a 2005 festival set break. (Photo by Matthew Sieber)

One research assistant compared the atmosphere very specifically to that of the outdoor stages:

The space was very large and very dry—the carpet, Christmas lights and the drab walls all felt sterile to me. I just kept thinking how displaced the music was in this hotel-like atmosphere. Because it was so large, the intimacy of the performance was drastically affected. People could move very far away from the band and the dancers, and this spread out the energy in the room. In contrast, I saw this same group on Saturday night outside at 6th Street, and there was this intense celebration feeling, and this feeling that those present were locked in to what the musicians/dancers

were doing. It was immense, on Saturday, the interaction between audience and performer. (Angela Scharfenberger, fieldnotes)

Her description highlights a powerful point of investigation, in that she perceived a sense of “largeness” in the Convention Center space that diffused any sense of connectedness. However, it is significant to note that the Union Board Stage was physically *much* larger than the Convention Center, yet was perceived as having an affect of interaction and intimacy. How was that achieved, since it was obviously not an affect of spatial dimensions alone?

I would argue here for an explanation that hearkens back to the central premise of this study of spatial liminality—that it was the presence of the familiar in the transformed, rather than a total transformation, that created the liminal affect of “not-not-here” that powerfully evoked a sense of “festival.” Unlike in the churches or street areas, where the space itself cued a consensual and familiar frame of reference which powerfully underscored the sense of juxtaposition and liminal affect that occurred with the overlay of festival cues, a space like the Convention Center was, by definition, a multi-use space with no clear prior identity—in other words, “sterile.” Any attempt to create “festival space” here therefore became a new construction rather than a transformation (in the sense that transformation requires something to transform *from*), and the result was a lack of the affective coherence and *communitas* that characterized the equally-large (or larger) Union Board Stage venue. Without familiar spatial cues and shared frames of reference required to perceive and orient the reversals, transgressions, or juxtapositions of “festival,” there was significantly less sense of the liminal in the Convention Center space—no consensual basis for the tension between the familiar and

the transformed which would have effected a festivalized sense of “not-not-here” double negativity.

Looking Ahead to 2006

As noted throughout this study, the process of festival production was cyclical and reflexive. Just as I began my analysis of the 2005 production process with the debriefing meeting that occurred after the 2004 event, the 2005 Lotus Festival was also followed by a similar gathering for evaluation and feedback that could be applied to plans for 2006. Individual committees met in early October to discuss their own issues, and committee chairs each prepared a report of committee feedback; all of the committee chairs then gathered together, along with LEAF staff, on the penultimate Saturday in October to share evaluations and discuss the future implications.

Among the more significant topics of discussion was the future of the outdoor street stage model. In spite of some mixed feedback from audience members, Lee expressed confidence in the new structure and other production participants expressed support for continuing to use these block-long exclusive outdoor venues. Lee commented that “6th Street is the new reality!” (Lee Williams, meeting participation) and proceeded to guide meeting discussion into a brainstorming process for figuring out how to improve access security via the management of this and similar venues—i.e., doubling the number of volunteers responsible for enforcing wristband-only access, training volunteers and house managers on-site to improve awareness of issues associated with venue access points, setting up checkpoints earlier, and doing a pre-show venue “sweep”

to remove non-wristbanded individuals who may have entered the venue space before checkpoints were erected.

In the debriefing meeting and during other post-festival conversations, Lee also spoke about the potential to create a new outdoor street stage on 7th Street between Walnut and Washington Streets (thus the same size and relative location as 6th Street, only one block further north). This idea developed on the basis of both producer evaluation and input from the City of Bloomington. From the perspective of production participants, the 4th Street stage was felt to have been “out by itself” and disconnected from the festival center, thus begging for replacement with something closer; also, there was a strong sense of dissatisfaction with the closure of Walnut Street, with many comments that the area was “dead” and did not appreciably contribute to the festival vibe. From the perspective of the City of Bloomington, the primary concern was also the closure of Walnut Street. In particular, the Bloomington Police Department found it extremely disruptive and pushed hard for Lee to find a venue that would be east of Walnut; in fact, the police were the ones who suggested 7th Street as an alternative. Lee noted to me later that he had considered 7th Street in past years but rejected it on the basis of the disruption it would cause for residences and businesses on that block; however, “now that we’ve done 6th Street,” he felt more confident about the prospect and was willing to consider the idea for 2006 (Lee Williams, personal interview).

Thus, plans for 2006 seemed poised to proceed on the basis of a new festival model that would incorporate even more outdoor spaces and shift to a landscape completely east of Walnut Street. From a research perspective, this could have two primary implications that would be worth investigating in a future study. First, thinking

out loud, Lee commented to me that, based on 2005 single-night attendance estimated at roughly 2450 people, the addition of 7th Street would theoretically allow the containment of the current festival audience in only two venues—6th Street, which would hold 1500 people, and 7th Street with a capacity of 1000, adding up to a total capacity of approximately 2500 people on any given evening. On this basis, he mused about the possibility of eliminating some other venues, such as churches that could only hold about 250 people (Lee Williams, personal interview). It would be interesting to see, therefore, how the spatial landscape and spatial affect of future festivals might change if the indoor quality that characterized the original festivals is replaced by a model that is primarily outdoors. Second, the use of 7th Street instead of 4th Street would create a festival geography comprised mostly of Kirkwood, 6th, and 7th Streets between Walnut and Washington Streets—a more concentrated geography roughly three blocks long and one block wide, with nothing south of Kirkwood. This new layout would de-center Kirkwood Avenue and the Buskirk-Chumley Theater, shifting the physical middle of the festival geography to a point somewhere on 6th Street. Worth investigating, therefore, would be the ways in which perceptions (and the physical construction) of a “festival headquarters” and festival center might be moved from their current locations or else re-conceptualized at the present site.

Beyond Lotus: Considering Spatial Liminality

Overview

As stated in the introduction to this dissertation, the present study was originally conceived with the goal of exploring the ways local sitedness articulates with the ostensible “globalness” of world music, and how these articulations contribute to the construction of meaning in world music in festival contexts. I quickly realized, however, that travel to that theoretical plane would not be easily accomplished from the present state of scholarship—there were too many steps missing. It would be impossible to talk about how participants experienced the festivalized relationship between the local and the global without first understanding how these participants experienced locality and, more specifically, the local vis-à-vis festival. Or, to put it in the terms I used to explain this study to my mother, “It seems that audiences at, say, the First Christian Church, listening to a Brazilian artist, must somehow be experiencing some kind of relationship to an idea called ‘Brazil.’ But I can’t figure out how they experience ‘Brazil’ in the church during

Lotus if I don't back up and figure out how they experience the church, in general, during Lotus." If there was an apparent tension between "worldness" and physical, local sitedness, it seemed logical to first unpack the notion of "sitedness"—by exploring the sites themselves. While festival participants may all have had a different sense of what it meant to be a "Bloomingtonian" or different senses of a personal identity vis-à-vis place, Bloomington spaces were physically sensible and shared. This is particularly true in the case of the Lotus Festival, where these spaces were reduced to an area of several blocks that formed a common basis for sited experience. Thus did space emerge as a locus for the investigation of locality and festival, leading eventually into the present study of how festival space was constructed through processes of production and how the presence of the familiar in the transformed enabled the invocation of ambiguity and liminality via tension between juxtaposed frames of reference.

Using a case-study approach focused on a year-long process of festival production, this dissertation has explored the role of space and spatial issues vis-à-vis the definition and characteristics of "festival" as a genre. It has also demonstrated that a festival's identification with the genre of "world music" does not preclude the event's simultaneous role as a community festival, with important ties to local physical and social structures, and so illustrates the importance of considering the event on the level of its physical sitedness and thus its relationship to existing scholarship on the functions and implications of "festival" more broadly. By investigating the motivations and methods for the construction of festival space, this study has clearly demonstrated the significance of spatial issues in an analysis of festival as a genre and a basis for considering space as

an important actor in oft-cited principles of festival liminality—juxtaposition, transgression, reversal.

More specifically, the dissertation has provided examples of the ways in which these principles of liminality could be attributed to the affect of partial transformation of space, suggesting that it is the apprehension of the familiar in the transformed that enables a powerful spatial ambiguity. This presents a challenge to scholars like Cantwell who describe festival as “spatially unincorporated” (Cantwell 1992: 294), suggesting instead that the efficacy of festival emerges not from unincorporation but rather from an incorporation of existing and constructed space and place that is strategically partial and thus highlights not only the transformation but the fact that there is something that has been transformed. The result is a liminal, “not-not-here” effect that contributes to the experience of festival and festival space as profoundly local yet affectively distinct from everyday life.

These principles of juxtaposition and ambiguity have been explored in the present study from several different angles. Starting with the history of the Lotus Festival, the event and its processes of production were situated in the city of Bloomington, Indiana. The conception of the festival was explored, particularly the ways in which early production discourse negotiated the event’s complex relationship to Indiana University and strategically used space and spatial positioning to suggest a particularly “community” identity that was distinct from a “university” identity but still overlaid onto a social and financial landscape where those distinctions were blurry. Discussion of the festival’s name also raised issues of ambiguity, as it was chosen to index both local and non-local place. After presenting this history, the study moved on to approach the notion of a

“festival geography” and “festival space” that was shaped out of the existing landscape of downtown Bloomington during the “visioning” phase of production. It was demonstrated how the festival geography was constructed through orientation to a new center, as well as to performance spaces, proximity, and distinction from non-festival space on the basis of vehicle and pedestrian activity. By re-centering, re-bounding, and assigning new rules for spatial use, these methods functionally re-assigned new kinesthetic and perceptual skills to existing downtown space, creating a liminal state of juxtaposition that dis- and reoriented the evaluation of place and thus contributed to the perception of a festivalized affect.

Following the establishment of a theoretical framework for considering the larger festival geography and festival space as a whole, the next step in the study was to explore if and how principles of spatial ambiguity were mobilized in the different, smaller spaces which comprised the total festival geography. These areas of investigation included performance venues as well as the non-venue spaces conceived as “street scene,” and the discussion spanned both the programming and committee phases of production. In terms of performance spaces, the first focus was on the churches used as Lotus venues, which according to participant discourse were perceived as having an affect distinct from other types of festival space. Focusing on aspects such as architecture and spatially-cued frames of reference, analysis of these spaces illustrated the ways in which both producers and audiences perceived and experienced a tension between the sacred and secular affect of the church-as-venue spaces—in other words, a liminal state that was simultaneously “church” and “not-church.” The study then analyzed the notion of the “outdoor street stage” that was conceived by producers as a way to combat the presence of non-

ticketholders who had, in the past, gathered around ticket-only tent venues and experienced performances free of charge. Using evidence drawn from production discourse as well as participant experience, these block-long sites of exclusive access were discussed vis-à-vis the negotiation and navigation of multiple claims to spatial ownership and rights of spatial usage. The study unpacked the construction of tension and spatial liminality in these landscapes by illustrating operative principles of public versus private space and demonstrating how associated principles of inclusion and exclusion underwent festivalized reversals with regard to citizen rights, socio-economic class, and the rhetoric of “neighborhood” in the Lotus message and mission.

The dissertation concluded by theorizing ambiguity and liminality in relationship to the construction of non-venue festival spaces, as well as to overall participant orientation to the festival event. In terms of the “street scene,” it was illustrated how these spaces were conceived simultaneously as being both external to and extensions of the affect of performance spaces. Visual components were designed to index festival-ness and contribute to the extrapolation of festival affect from the indoor venues into the external areas, as well as to create a meta-communicative framework that enabled the interpretation of visual elements according to festival discourse. Street scene art elements also functioned to enable the partial revaluation of place vis-à-vis new points of orientation, and the positioning of these elements in common spaces helped effect a *collective* spatial reorientation wherein broadly shared experience bolstered the legitimacy of the resultant new conceptual frameworks and festival affect. Finally, analysis of data from on-site research at the festival event effectively confirmed the significance of space vis-à-vis participant experience. In addition to providing sited

evidence that supported the conclusions drawn throughout the study, consultant interviews also illustrated the ways in which participants tended to orient their festival experience around conceptualizations of space and made evaluations of the efficacy of festival-ness at least partially on the basis of perceptions of spatial affect. Also explored were the role of spatial orientation in conceptions of festival geography and the ways in which strategies of naming highlighted participant experiences of juxtaposition and spatial ambiguity.



Figure 7.1: A photographer's lens captures the sensory blur and swirling juxtapositions of Lotus festival space, 2005. (Photo by Brian Garvey)

Self and Other, Here and There: World Music Festivals and Ambiguity

The process-oriented approach taken in the present study clearly contributes to a larger understanding of the role of space and spatial issues in the construction of a festival's characteristic liminality. Further, the notion of spatial liminality is highly instructive for the consideration of local sitedness and the ways in which constructions of festival space strategically articulate with familiar landscapes to produce the juxtapositions and reversals which typify the cultural performance genre of festival and enable certain festivalized behaviors and types of social affect. However, I would like to now conclude this dissertation by returning to some of my original ideas about how this local sitedness might relate to the "worldness" of world music, and use the present study as the basis for hypothesizing on the broader subject of the construction of meaning at world music festivals. Specifically, I put forth here that the present study of space and place provides the tools for considering the larger question of the articulations between local and global, and that the notions of ambiguity and spatial liminality serve as highly suggestive entry points into some of the more abstract issues of place that accompany studies of world music.

The present study has demonstrated the ways in which the construction of festival space can provide mechanisms for cuing simultaneous and juxtaposed frames of reference that enable a heightened attention to local space vis-à-vis apprehension of transformations. This is a primary means by which a world music festival indexes place and a sense of place—on a local level—but world music is, intrinsically, also a powerful vehicle for referencing non-local place. For example, Chapter 6 used evidence from consultant interviews to illustrate how festival participants were orienting their

experience on the basis of both local venue *and* country name, employing conjunctive references to spaces/places that are both “here” and “not here.” It seems clear from these interviews that participants were experiencing some kind of juxtaposition in terms of local and non-local place. I would like to suggest that this juxtaposition was at least partially enabled by processes inherent in the conception and experience of world music as a generic form.

By its nominal “worldness,” world music is by its very nature an “othering” category that emerged as a marketing label for non-Western musical forms; further, the distinction of “non-Western” has placed an emphasis on geographic differentiation and the conceptual invocation of some “othered” place. The creation and deployment of notions of the “other” and “there” also necessarily carry with them certain constructions of “self” and “here” as well as certain relationships among all four concepts. The construction of self and other is not absolute, however, but rather rooted in the individual, positioned, historically-informed experience of participants. Cues (aural, visual, metacultural, etc.) are “mediated by the idiosyncratic experience of the individual . . . not so much express[ing] meaning as they give us the capacity to make meaning” (Cohen 1985:14-15). In other words, the intersubjective nature of the self/other encounter provides an infinite number of ways in which identity and place can be conceived, and such conceptions are necessarily relational and mutually defining.

The musical performances of a world music festival lend an aural dimension to the experience of place and other. Scholars such as Martin Stokes have noted the ways in which musical sound does not reflect but rather *creates* “means by which people recognize identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them” (Stokes

1994:5). In this view, music serves as a tool for differentiation. Stokes also quotes Giddens' notion of "reembedding," or the separation of space from place wherein places become redefined by quite distant social influences (Giddens in Stokes 1994:18). Considering the multiple senses of place operative in a world music festival performance context—artists' senses of homeland, artists' senses of the festival location, audiences' senses of the artist's home country, and audiences' senses of the festival location in both its everyday and transformed states¹—this notion of reembedding is helpful in considering music and musical sound as something which can intensely organize memory (personal or collective) and the present into numerous uniquely local "places" and temporal "nows" that can be plural and reflective of multiple identities/selves (Stokes 1994:18).

The concept of reembedding also resonates with Steven Feld's notion of schizophonia, or the separation of sound and its origins (see Feld 1994).² The fact that sited festival space effectively recontextualizes musical sound, in combination with the "othering" rhetoric of world music, calls attention to this schizophonia and the fact that these performances and these sounds have their cultural origins (and original significance) elsewhere. This sense of splitting thus indexes a place which is "not here," even if its source is not identified. In this way, sound also becomes a type of "ethnographic fragment" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998), a partiality made to represent its context of cultural origin precisely because it inspires a recognition that it *is* detached and

¹ Jocelyne Guilbault also makes some good points about music and space, in terms of how place is perceived differently depending on who is listening, and how spatial symbolism is relational. See Guilbault 1997:37-38.

² Feld uses this concept to refer to and discuss recorded sound that is separated from its electro-acoustic source; I'm taking some license here with his term.

therefore invokes a sense of some larger entity from which it is separated. This sense of a representative fragment is further enabled by the “packaged” nature of many of these performances; Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, in her discussions of touristic festivals (which I believe have parallels in world music festival performance), raises the point that many times these performers actually become “signs of themselves,” presenting either an essentialized or totalized representation that uses tropes of cultural identity to reference an image of another place or another culture (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:55). Brian Wallis calls this “self-stereotyping” for foreign consumption (Wallis 1994:268-271).

The self/other construction is enabled in other dimensions of the world music festival context, as well, including the visual. Certain visual elements, such as costuming, can certainly index geographic place or cultural identity. However, some scholars have noted that there might be particular, culturally-informed modes of seeing that produce a world-as-exhibition effect, especially in a West/non-West encounter. For example, Timothy Mitchell suggests a particularly European cognitive scheme for ordering the world that is rooted in a cultural history of formal exhibition and corollary objectification of the “other.” He suggests that this creates a spectator mode of viewing in which external reality is cognitively grasped as something which *can* be represented, thereby creating a point of view which separates self from view (rather than viewing self as part of the totality) (Mitchell 1989:223,227). In other words, there is the automatic creation of a subject/object relationship that embodies distance (or alienation) as its primary characteristic.

As noted throughout this study, though, the venue structure of the Lotus Festival was strategically designed to produce an affect not of distance, but of intimacy and

closeness. Thus do spatial constructions often attempt to blur the self-other dichotomy, hinting at an ambivalence which also resides in the various discourses of diversity that surround world music. There is simultaneously a discourse of diversity (i.e. difference), universality (i.e. sameness), and what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett calls “unity-in-diversity” (i.e. we are different but it doesn’t matter, or else we are the same *because* we are different—either way, a neutralizing effect) (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:77). These competing discourses provide further ambivalence in the ways we (in connection with world music) reference self to other and self to “world.” There occurs an additional tension between indexical and iconic modes of symbolic reference—“we are all related” (indexical) versus “we are all alike” (iconic) (see Fernandez and Herzfeld 1998:118-119). The end result is a state of multiple “we”s (Urban 2001) and emplacements—or, as succinctly put by Jacques Attali, “. . . an anxiety-ridden quest for lost difference, following a logic from which difference is banished” (Attali in Feld 1994:274).

In other words, to parallel the “not-not-here” liminality of festival space, ambivalence in the self/other constructions of world music and world music performance also creates a situation of “not-not-us” and “not-not-other” vis-à-vis festival performers and face-to-face encounters with non-local artists. The very definition of world music, as discussed earlier, has depended heavily on the self/other distinction—variously drawing on the allure of the “exotic”; the appeal to a return to a simpler, more “real” world; or, more generally, depending on the marketability of the novel and different (Taylor 1997; Urban 2001). Despite this definition on the basis of otherness, however, world music thrives on rhetoric of inclusion, embrace, and global-village one-ness. The discourse of world music consequently invokes a “worldness” that is both an “otherness” *and* an all-

encompassing collectivity. World music performance, especially in physically-sited contexts such as festival, would therefore seem to be thriving precisely because it indexes identity and place via a juxtaposition where “they/there” is simultaneously equivalent to and distinct from “us/here, employing a strategic ambivalence that enables a more ambiguously-located experience.

This idea of strategic ambivalence in world music articulates well with the present study’s illumination of sited ambiguity in spatial affect; it is also exciting to consider how the construction of spatial liminality on a local level might interact with the sonically and rhetorically ambiguous references to place, self, and other that could occur when the aural and discursive dimensions of world music are factored into the festival equation. In particular, it would be interesting to apply a theoretical model such as Yi-Fu Tuan’s to the consideration of geographic or sonic markers (conceptual or aural “landmarks”), in conjunction with visual and spatial cues, and hypothesize some ways in which physical-spatial dislocations and reorientations to space and place (see Tuan 1977) might articulate with conceptual-aural dislocations and reorientations to place to produce a transportive affect that is truly unique to world music festivals.

As mentioned above, the intersubjective and necessarily relational conception of self and other suggests that constructions of “here” and “there” are equally relational and individually-based. It is possible to suggest, therefore, that aural, visual, and conceptual cues in the festival environment (i.e., sonic symbols, geographic references, tropes of cultural identity tied to memory and past experience, etc.) were helping to propel participants not into concretized and shared senses of place but rather into what Appadurai calls “landscapes” (ethnoscapes, mediascapes, etc.) that are based in processes

of imagination. As mentioned in the introduction to this study, these landscapes are “imagined worlds . . . the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe”; these worlds can reflect as well as contest or subvert “official” constructions (Appadurai 1996:33). This idea is consistent with the notion that world music employs a strategic ambivalence towards place, as the landscapes indexed by world music performance can be seen as fluid—“a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility” (Appadurai 1996:31).

When this fluid place-identification is superimposed onto the constructed liminality of locally-sited festival space, it is therefore possible to speculate that another layer of experience in world music festivals has to do with the inclusion of these imagined places into the range for social ordering that are already made available via festival liminality. Thus could Lotus be quite literally “bringing the world to our neighborhood,” as suggested in one participant’s statement that “last night we went from Ghana to Cuba to Québec to Tibet, all in the space of forty-five minutes” (Holladay 2005). Pending the collection of more targeted data, I would like to suggest that, through physical-spatial processes of dis- and reorientation (Tuan 1977) combined with the aforementioned ways in which world music performances can index place or senses of place, locally-sited Lotus venues might experientially *become* these countries, or at least imagined representations of those places that are still functionally re-locating from the perspective of meaning and experience. If we consider place as a concretion of value and symbolic associations, and those values and associations are reoriented both spatially and by other means such as cultural typifications, verbal explanations, visual performance

cues (costume, etc.), or sonic narratives, then it seems possible to hypothesize that festival spatial liminality enables an total experience that is, in an extension of Tuan's model, quite literally in a new, "othered" place. The idea that a new place could be constructed via the juxtaposition of liminal local space and the indexing of ambiguous imagined landscapes would also be consistent with the phenomenological notion of the construction of a "finite province of meaning" (see Schutz 1964, 1976), in which there are multiple realities (music, fantasy, play, dreams, etc.) wherein the way meaning is constructed differs from the way meaning is constructed in everyday life (Stone 2003:81).

In a reciprocal relationship, therefore, world music performance in the festival context could be seen to index imagined landscapes that inflect the experience of spatial affect in locally-constructed festival spaces, already conceptualized as ambiguous via the present study, at the same time that the experience of spatial affect via locally-sited juxtapositions has an impact on the way imagined landscapes and an "othered" sense of place are deployed in the construction of meaning. This leads to a consideration of how analysis of world music festivals might support theories that posit the mutual implication and constitution of the global and local. In such theories, there are no absolute totalities which overlay reality; rather, the global resides in the systemic process of articulations among localities and local processes, and the local resides in re-particularizations of the global and global systemic encounters. Both are ever-shifting, both context and context-generative (see, for example, Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1996; Friedman 1994).

Lastly, this hypothesis of a dual liminal affect vis-à-vis both local sitedness and non-local indexicality could also prove useful in exploring the relative success and

popularity of the Lotus Festival event. For example, in the course of my research I was told that the Lotus concert series (where individual world music artists were presented in a more traditional concert situation, typically in the Buskirk-Chumley Theater) was struggling, and that the organization was having trouble filling houses. At the same time, the festival was bursting at the seams with eager audiences. This seems to suggest that the difference lay not in the relative popularity of the music being presented, which was generically similar in both contexts, but rather had to do with other components of the performance experience. The present study, as well as this final discussion of theoretical expansions, would seem to support a contention that, in addition to the music, space and spatial liminality also played a role in the popularity of the festival and peoples' attraction to the festival experience over the concert experience—that the popular affect was a combination of spatial liminality and the strategic ambivalence with which world music indexes place, rather than transportive sound in a performance space such as the theater where space played a familiar, unambiguous role. This hypothesis seems supported, at least on the surface, by evidence from other music events that have failed or succeeded in Bloomington. For example, failed festivals such as HoosierFest and Stone Song attempted to create festivalized space but with music consistent with more familiar rock genres; this suggests an equal but opposite partiality of affect to the Lotus concert series. In contrast, the success of a popular event such as the Bloomington Early Music Festival could be interpreted as having a dually-liminal affect vis-à-vis festivalized space as well as the *temporally*-dislocating role of sound. All of these hypotheses provide fertile ground for further research and theorizing on the nature of the relationship among space,

place, and liminality, both in terms of world music festivals and in terms of other types of festival enactments.

Some Closing Thoughts

In considering an event such as the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival, there could have been many other different areas of focus for a research study. Or, as a friend suggested once, this dissertation represents only one of the “twelve other dissertations” contained within this festival, and there would be still more if the scope of research was expanded to include other, similar festivals. For example, a different approach might have involved analysis of the role of volunteerism in the construction of a sense of locality and ownership in the festival; in a related vein, it could also have been instructive to tie volunteerism and other modes of participation to issues of identity construction, especially in relationship to interaction with non-local performers. Still other research might have focused on artist experience at the festival, or worked to unpack the ways in which artist repertoire choices in the festival context inform a consideration of “world music” as a genre, vis-à-vis issues of authenticity or artist sonic identity. All of these topics represent areas that are calling out for further research.

Further research might also take on the future of the Lotus Festival. For example, a follow-up study could focus on the organizational effort to establish an institutional memory via the encouragement of key individuals such as Lee Williams to explain and codify production processes so that they could eventually be taken up by an expanded committee structure. As production would thereby become more collaborative and less centralized, it could be worthwhile to apply methods from the ethnography of

organizations to an exploration of the ways in which constructions of festival and festival space shift as they are conceived vis-à-vis a new organizational structure. Other possibilities might include an analysis of the festival in temporal perspective, based on Lee's frequent comments to the effect of

We're always doing something new! If the festival was scripted, it would be easier to produce, but . . . I'm not sure if it's good or bad, but it always winds up different every year, no matter what I try to do. (Lee Williams, personal interview)

This suggests two approaches: one based on a comparison of festival manifestations from year to year, and the other on an investigation of how changes are perceived and evaluated by production participants and audience members, perhaps as a sort of "temporal liminality" that unpacks the role of nostalgia and newness (see, for example, Urban 2001).

A final site for further investigation would involve the ways in which planned spatial changes contribute to the affect of future Lotus Festival events. Specifically, Lee's comments in Chapter 6 suggest the possibility of moving to a model involving exclusively or primarily large outdoor street venues, with the elimination of churches and other smaller, indoor venues. To what extent, therefore, might the shift to a more "rock concert"-like use of space—huge crowds in completely exclusive, outdoor, standing-only contexts—impact the identity of the Lotus Festival as a community festival or even as "festival"? The present study has drawn from data that suggests that feelings of "intimacy" and *communitas* at the Lotus Festival are central to the way local attendees find affinity with the event as well as the way in which producers currently conceive the event's primary identity, and this study has further demonstrated the ways in which those identifications and experiences are connected to spatial issues. Already in 2005, the

elimination of ambiguously-accessible tent venues gave rise to audience perceptions of diffuseness and dilution, and the increased emphasis on less inclusive modes of participation led to perceptions of “anti-festival” and a decrease in feelings of *communitas*. Whereas past comments (from 2004) located “intimacy” in a number of festival sites such as the churches, the outdoor tents, and smaller indoor performance venues such as the John Waldron Arts Center, data from 2005 shows that perceptions of “intimacy” have largely narrowed to comprise only church venues. Modes of participation have been increasingly circumscribed, as well, with a greater focus on issues of spatial control and authority that promised to be even more central to the production discussions in 2006 and beyond.

The experience of the Lotus Festival as “intimate” seems to have also stemmed from the ways in which the construction of festival spaces articulated with some common perceptions of the “Bloomington community.” While it is impossible to generalize or reify this notion across the entire population, my consultants and the festival producers consistently described the “Bloomington community” with terms such as “closely-bonded,” “everyone knows everyone,” “welcoming and friendly,” and as having a “small-town feel” (Personal interviews). The present study has suggested that, up to 2005, the production of festival space articulated with local space and a local communal identity in a way which complemented and drew on these conceptions—small venue spaces, public-participatory landscapes, bounded but often non-exclusive sonic and visual experiences, and, despite a revenue-based model, a spatial identity as “in the community” from its earliest conception, something distinct from a more private “club scene.”

It would be interesting, therefore, to examine the ways in which modes of spatial manipulation in future events contribute to changes in participant experiences of festival and the communal identity of the Lotus Festival. Will the elimination of churches and smaller indoor venues also eliminate the affect of “intimacy”? Will a shift to larger outdoor street spaces decrease or increase *communitas*, with larger crowds leading, alternatively, to either a more impersonal and “faceless” experience or to an increased perception of common-ness and shared participation? Will the imposition of more control and the overt exercise of power over boundaries impact the experience of community in a way which causes a generic shift from “festival” and festivalized modes of participation, to something more akin to a less liminal, less ambiguous paradigm of “concert”? And finally, what will be the relationship among the mobilization of new spatial models, generic identification, and the future success of the event? A temporally comparative investigation on these bases would be a rich addition to the analysis of the reciprocal dialectic between space and the experience of meaning in a total performance event.

It is not possible to evaluate the full significance of spatial issues or of world music festivals within the context of a single case study, and even at this single event it would be rather disingenuous to have tried to generalize a “typical” festival space or festival experience, considering the simultaneous and multi-sited structure of the event and the roughly 6000 people who participated. I put forth this study, therefore, with a goal that was limited and twofold, yet hopefully suggestive: to provide a model for temporally expanding the notion of “festival” to include the processes by which such events come to be, and to use an in-depth investigation of one festival to propose and

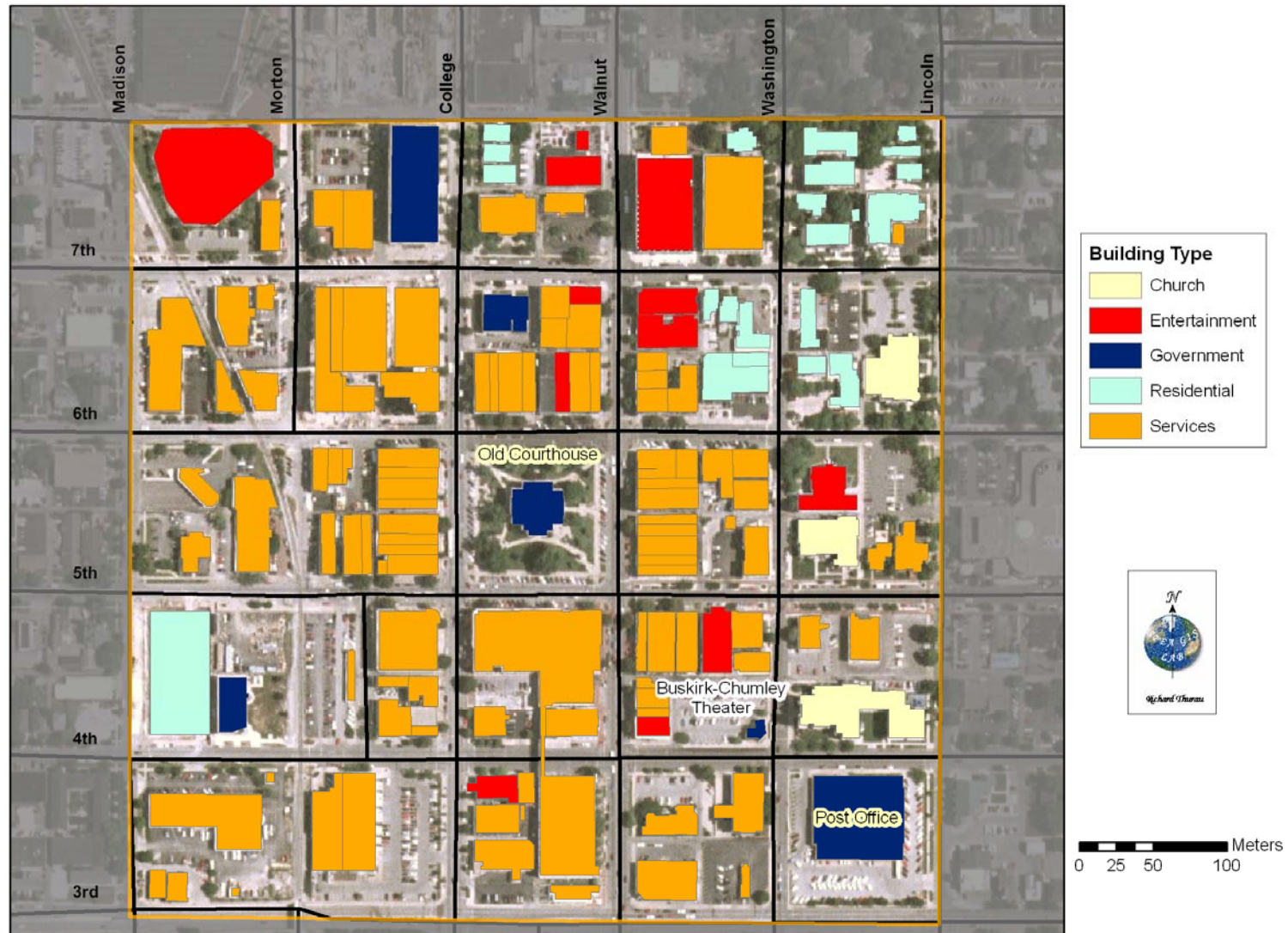
illuminate a theoretical approach that could provide an entry-point into the consideration of these large and multi-faceted events which are, at present, underrepresented in existing literature. Looking ahead, it is my hope that this study of Bloomington's Lotus World Music and Arts Festival will lead into a body of comparative research that might illuminate not only the present considerations of space and spatial liminality, but also add to the scholarly investigation of world music festivals more generally, perhaps including some of the other topics mentioned above. My methods and conclusions are thus offered here as a point of departure, to both inform and call for engagement with some of the broader questions concerning the intersections of world music, festival, and meaning.

Appendices

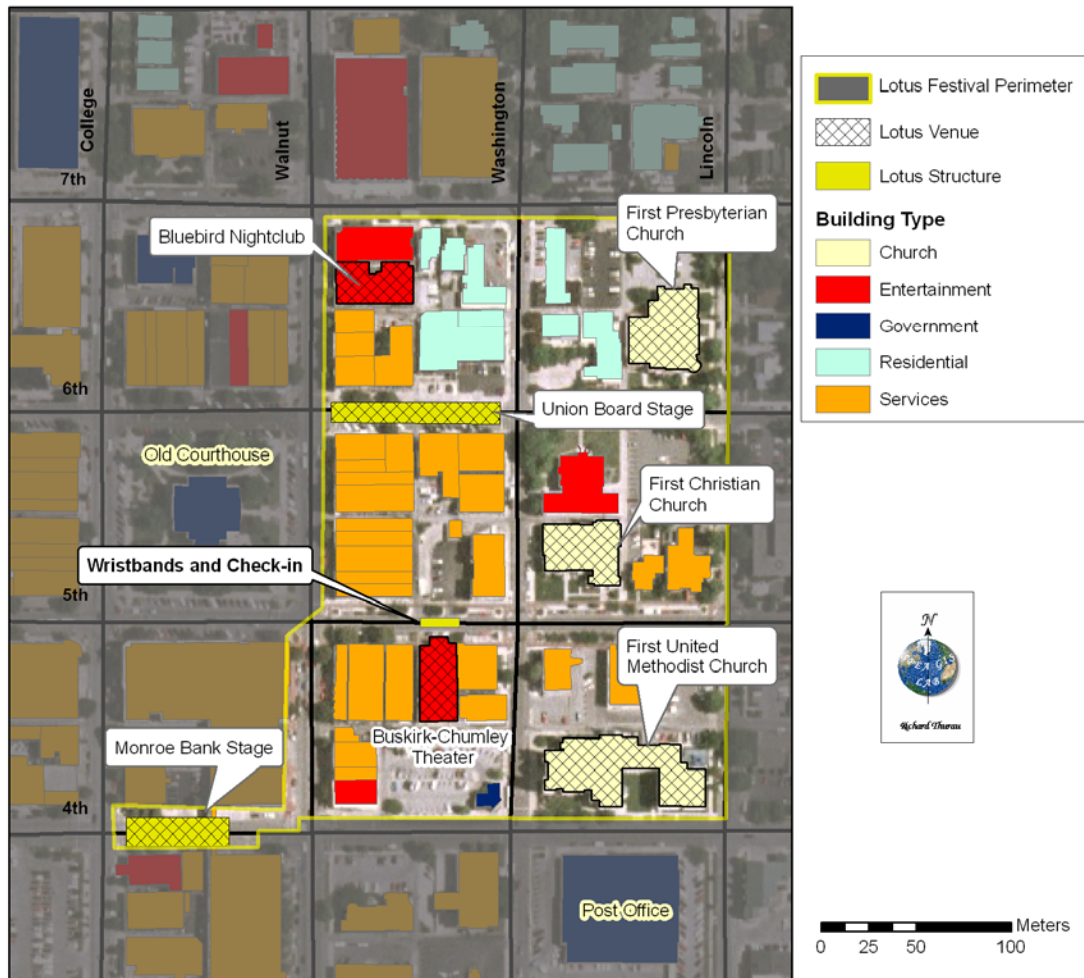
Appendix A: Mapping Bloomington

- *Downtown Bloomington*
- *Spatial shifts: “Festival” Bloomington with new center and re-purposed space*
- *Relationship between “everyday” and “festival” Bloomington*

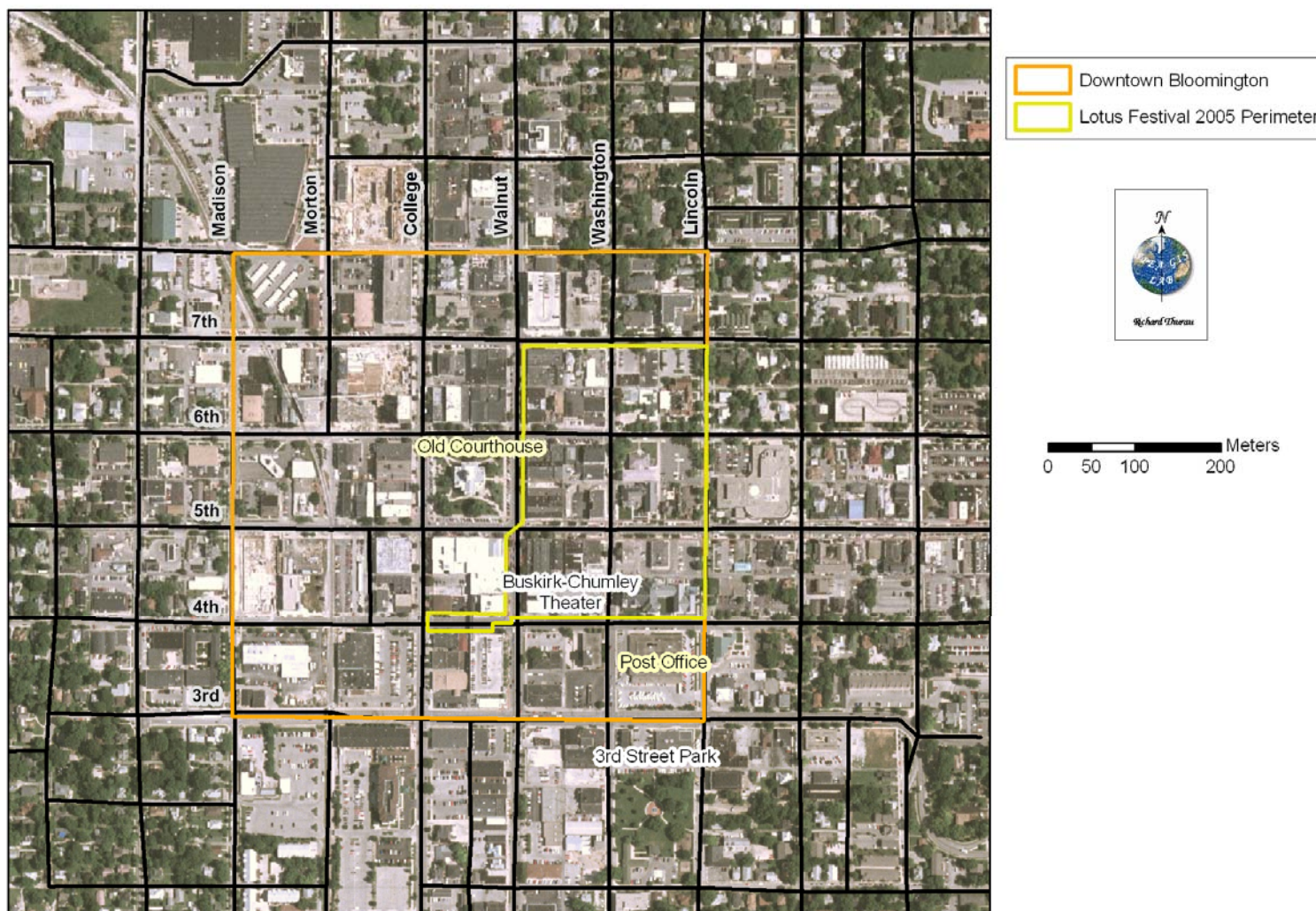
Downtown Bloomington



Spatial shifts: “Festival” Bloomington with new center and re-purposed space



Relationship between “everyday” and “festival” Bloomington



Appendix B: Sample production documents

- *Artist housing grid, 2005*
- *Budget, LEAF 2005*
- *Excerpt from backline planning document, Lotus Festival 2005*
- *Programming artist-venue grid (Lee), early 2005 sketch*
- *Sample artist stage plot: APPEX*
- *Sample artist technical rider: Badi Assad*
- *Sample site plan: First Presbyterian Church*
- *Sample site plan: 4th Street Stage (Monroe Bank Stage)*
- *Sample schedule from 2005 Artist Advance Packet*
- *Transportation record: Airport pickups 2005*
- *Wish list (Lee), early in the 2005 programming process*

Artist housing grid, 2005

ARTIST HOTEL ROOMS 2005

	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Car	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
	Marriott Courtyard					A Summerhouse Inn						Marriott	Summer	Both
Alkinoos Ioannidis		5	5								N			
Ana Moura								7	6		N			
APPEX			3	3							Y			
Badi Assad			1								N			
Balkan Beat Box			4	4							N			
Creole Cowboys								4	4		Y			
Frigg								4	4		Y			
Funkadesi								6	6		Y			
Jake Shimabukuro			2								N			
King Wilkie								3			Y			
Kusun Ensemble								6	6		Y			
Los Gauchos									3	3	Y			
Lotus Tribute											Y			
Lura			5								N			
Mamar Kassey								5	5		Y			
Martires			6	6							N			
Nawal				2	2						Y			
Plena Libre							7				Y			
Rachael & Jake			3	3							Y			
Ruthie Foster	1	1									N			
Samarabalouf	3	3	3	3							N			
Sarah Lee Guthrie											Y			
Seu Jorge				5							Y			
Sidi Goma			7	7							N			
Teada								3			Y			
Tim Eriksen	1	1	1	1							N			
Tien Huicani											Y			
Trio Joubran			3	3							N			
Voco				3			3				Y			
Wailin' Jennys	2	2									Y			
Rene Goiffon		1	1	1							Y			
Misc			1	4							Y			
TOTAL-We Pay	7	7	43	40	2	0	10	31	34	3		\$9,900	\$4,940	\$14,840
TOTAL-Rooms	7	13	46	45	2	0	10	38	34	3		112	85	197

Budget, LEAF 2005

08/29/05

L.E.A.F., Inc. - Lee
Budget Report
January through December 2005

	<u>Jan - Dec '05</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
3000 — Income from Events, Programming	
3003 — Festival Thursday Tix	7,500.00
3008 — Festival Friday Tix	22,030.00
3009 — Festival Friday Discount Tix	5,003.00
3013 — Friday IU Students	7,385.00
3010 — Festival Saturday Tix	38,918.00
3011 — Festival Saturday Discount Tix	3,993.00
3014 — Saturday IU Students	10,088.00
3012 — Festival Fri/Sat Tix	48,613.00
3030 — Blossoms Concerts Tix	2,000.00
3031 — Blossoms School Fees	4,100.00
3050 — Concert Series Tickets	19,000.00
Total 3000 — Income from Events, Programming	168,630.00
3100 — Income from Sale of Merchandise	
3110 — CD Sales	25,000.00
3120 — T-shirt Sales	6,000.00
3125 — Poster Sales	100.00
3130 — Food/Beverage Proceeds	1,000.00
3140 — Pin	9,500.00
Total 3100 — Income from Sale of Merchandise	41,600.00
3200 — Contrib, Gift, Grant Income	
3210 — Presenting Sponsors	25,000.00
3220 — Corporate Donations	31,000.00
3230 — IU Donations	18,000.00
3240 — Friends	36,000.00
3250 — Arts Grants	5,700.00
3251 — Corporate Grants	2,000.00
3260 — Foundation Support	10,000.00
3270 — Individual	4,925.00
3280 — Adopt-a-School	3,000.00
Total 3200 — Contrib, Gift, Grant Income	135,625.00
3300 — Contributions - Restricted	
3310 — Contributions to Hertling Fund	685.00
3320 — Contributions to Endowment	2,500.00
Total 3300 — Contributions - Restricted	3,185.00
3400 — Other Fundraising Income	
3410 — Edible Lotus	17,657.00
Total 3400 — Other Fundraising Income	17,657.00
3600 — Investment Income	
3610 — Interest on Bank Accounts	30.00
Total 3600 — Investment Income	30.00
Total Income	366,727.00
Cost of Goods Sold	

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L.E.A.F., Inc. - Lee
Budget Report
 January through December 2005

	<u>Jan - Dec '05</u>
3910 — CDs Purchased For Resale	21,250.00
3920 — T-shirts Purchased For Resale	5,100.00
3930 — Posters	0.00
3940 — Pin	3,500.00
Total COGS	<u>29,850.00</u>
Gross Profit	336,877.00
Expense	
4000 — Performing Arts Expenses	
4100 — Artist Expenses	
4110 — Professional Fees	89,000.00
4115 — Visual Artists Fees	2,500.00
4120 — Lodging	18,500.00
4130 — Travel	6,000.00
4140 — Meals/Catering	5,500.00
4150 — Visas	1,400.00
Total 4100 — Artist Expenses	<u>122,900.00</u>
4200 — Venue Expenses	
4210 — Venue Rental	11,500.00
4220 — Tent Rental	5,500.00
4221 — Stages	2,230.00
4222 — Outdoor Facilities	500.00
4223 — Electrical Needs	0.00
4230 — PA Rental	15,500.00
4240 — Lighting Rental	1,000.00
4250 — Instrument Rental (Backline)	1,750.00
4260 — Equipment Rental	400.00
4270 — Table Rental	271.00
4280 — Repair	400.00
Total 4200 — Venue Expenses	<u>39,051.00</u>
4300 — Contract Labor	
4320 — Stage/House Managers	2,000.00
4330 — Lighting Engineers	300.00
4340 — Sound Engineers	300.00
4350 — Sites Coordinator	1,500.00
4355 — Visual Arts Coordinator	1,500.00
4360 — Volunteer Coordinators	3,000.00
4365 — Work Study	1,800.00
4370 — Security/Traffic	758.00
4375 — Medical	460.00
4380 — Festival Accounting Services	175.00
4390 — Labor	1,000.00
4395 — Union Labor	1,000.00
Total 4300 — Contract Labor	<u>13,793.00</u>
4400 — Misc. Performing Arts Expenses	
4410 — Liability Insurance	2,500.00
4420 — Ticket Printing	50.00
4430 — Wristbands	1,000.00

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L.E.A.F., Inc. - Lee
Budget Report
 January through December 2005

	<u>Jan - Dec '05</u>
Total 4400 — Misc. Performing Arts Expenses	3,550.00
4500 — Specific Event Expenses	
4520 — Volunteer Party	400.00
4530 — Reception	750.00
4540 — Visual Arts Expenses	<u>5,000.00</u>
Total 4500 — Specific Event Expenses	6,150.00
4600 — Specific Lotus Blossoms Expense	
4610 — Bazaar	589.00
4620 — Transportation for School Kids	944.00
4690 — Printing - Lotus Blossoms	50.00
4699 — Misc. Lotus Blossoms Expenses	<u>300.00</u>
Total 4600 — Specific Lotus Blossoms Expense	<u>1,883.00</u>
Total 4000 — Performing Arts Expenses	187,327.00
5000 — Development Expenses	
5200 — Friends Expenses	
5210 — Printing/Materials	250.00
5220 — Postage	1,200.00
5230 — Supplies	<u>117.00</u>
Total 5200 — Friends Expenses	1,567.00
5300 — Sponsorship Expenses	
5310 — Printing/Materials	25.00
5320 — Postage	88.00
5330 — Supplies	<u>695.00</u>
Total 5300 — Sponsorship Expenses	808.00
5500 — Edible Lotus Expenses	
5510 — Printing/Materials	312.00
5520 — Postage - Edible Lotus	285.00
5530 — Table Rental	302.00
5599 — Misc. Edible Lotus Expenses	<u>2,320.00</u>
Total 5500 — Edible Lotus Expenses	3,219.00
5600 — Endowment Expenses	
5610 — Transfers to Endowment	<u>2,500.00</u>
Total 5600 — Endowment Expenses	<u>2,500.00</u>
Total 5000 — Development Expenses	8,094.00
7000 — Marketing Expenses	
7100 — Direct Marketing	
7110 — Newsletter	3,201.00
7120 — Direct Mail	488.00
7150 — Art Fairs	70.00
7160 — Design	<u>1,500.00</u>
Total 7100 — Direct Marketing	5,259.00
7200 — Media Buys	

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L.E.A.F., Inc. - Lee
Budget Report
January through December 2005

	<u>Jan - Dec '05</u>
7210 — Radio Ads	750.00
Total 7200 — Media Buys	<u>750.00</u>
Total 7000 — Marketing Expenses	6,009.00
8000 — General & Administr. Expenses	
8100 — Payroll	
8110 — Salaries	86,388.00
8120 — Payroll Tax Expenses	<u>6,609.00</u>
Total 8100 — Payroll	92,997.00
8200 — Office Expenses	
8210 — Office Rent	5,100.00
8220 — Office Telephone	1,920.00
8230 — Office Supplies	2,500.00
8240 — Postage	1,504.00
8250 — Printing/Copying	5,200.00
8255 — Festival Supplies	1,300.00
8260 — Office Equipment	900.00
8270 — Office Utilities	<u>2,530.00</u>
Total 8200 — Office Expenses	20,954.00
8300 — Service Fees	
8310 — Bank Fees	36.00
8320 — Credit Card Fees	<u>4,000.00</u>
Total 8300 — Service Fees	4,036.00
8400 — Research & Development	
8410 — Conference Fees	1,100.00
8420 — Travel & Lodging	3,200.00
8430 — Business Meals	525.00
8440 — Dues & Subscriptions	607.00
8450 — Board	800.00
8460 — Audit	5,000.00
8490 — Other R&D Expenses	<u>600.00</u>
Total 8400 — Research & Development	<u>11,832.00</u>
Total 8000 — General & Administr. Expenses	<u>129,819.00</u>
Total Expense	<u>331,249.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>5,628.00</u>
Net Income	<u>5,628.00</u>

Excerpt from backline planning document, Lotus Festival 2005

FRIDAY, Buskirk-Chumley Theater

Staff: Joe Donnelly, Joe Galvin, help from Mitch Rice (SM)

Before 1:30: Load in ALL gear for ALL bands (some gear will already be there, see below)

****Mark Miyake will deliver his bass (with pickup) for Alkinoos, in time for soundcheck**

EQUIPMENT	FOR BAND	SOURCE
1 snare coated stripe with stand	Lura	Joe D./Columbus HS
1 kick pedal	Lura	
1 HH stand	Lura, Al	
1 floor tom 16"	Lura	
1 pair of congas: 1 conga and 1 tumba (should already be at venue from Thurs)	Lura	Joe Galvin
4 cymbal stands	Lura (3), Al (4)	Joe D./Columbus HS
Cymbal set (2 crash, 1 ride, 1 hihat, 1 ride)	Lura, Al	
2 drum stools	Lura (2), Al (1)	
1 Bass amp and cab (Carvin Amp, 4x10 cab)	Lura, Al	Roadworthy
1 cajon	Al	Joe D.
1 "electroclassic" guitar	Al	Anthony Guest-Scott
1 Keyboard (should already be at venue from Thurs)	Al	Joe D.'s friend?
1 keyboard double stand (should already be at venue from Thurs)	Al	
1 Piece of wood 1m X 0,35m X 0,01m	Al	Ask John Byers to cut
1 DOUBLE BASS with professional quality pick up and line out	Al	Mark Miyake
1 Guitar amp (Marshall)	Al	Roadworthy
5 guitar stands	Al	Lotus
5 music stands with lights (should already be at venue from Thurs)	Al	BCT's stands, Joe D.'s lights
Large oriental carpet	Sidi Goma	Qaisar Oriental Rug
(Flowers for Sidi Goma: see miscellaneous needs)		

1:30: SET UP for Alkinoos Ioannidis soundcheck

1 CAJON
4 CYMBAL STANDS
1 H/H STAND
CYMBALS (RIDE 20" SPLASH 10" CRASH 14" CRASH 16")
H/H CYMBALS 12"
1 DRUM STOOL

1 ELECTROCLASSIC GTR
1 PIANO KURZWEIL K 2600X with piano ROM
1 KEYS DOUBLE STAND
1 PIECE OF WOOD 1m X 0,35m X0,01m
1 Bass amp and cab (Carvin Amp, 4x10 cab)
1 DOUBLE BASS with professional quality pick up and line out
1 GTR AMP (MARSHALL)
5 GTR STANDS
5 MUSIC STANDS WITH LIGHT

2:45-3:15: STRIKE Alkinoos, SET UP for Lura soundcheck

1 snare coated stripe with stand
1 kick pedal
1 HH stand
1 floor tom 16"
1 pair of congas: 1 conga and 1 tumba
3 cymbal stands
1 cymbal set (2 crash, 1 ride, 1 hihat)
2 drum stools
1 Bass amp and cab (Carvin Amp, 4x10 cab)

**2:45-3:15: Sidi Goma's rep will meet with tech crew; no soundcheck)

3:15-4:45: Lura soundcheck

**Leave Lura equipment in place for performance.

7:00-8:30: Lura performance

8:30-9:00: Set transition: STRIKE Lura gear, SET UP Alkinoos Ioannidis

9:00-10:15: Alkinoos Ioannidis performance

10:15-10:45: Set transition: STRIKE Alkinoos, SET UP Sidi Goma

Large Oriental rug; may need to be taped down (ask them)
Flowers: make sure they have gotten these, should be 2 sets in dressing room at BCT

**10:15: Mark (or his wife) will come up to the stage to retrieve the bass; Anthony will also come to retrieve his guitar at this time

10:45-midnight: Sidi Goma performance

Midnight: After performances:

<u>Leave at venue</u>	<u>Return to Joe or holding area at BCT</u>	<u>Move to UNION BOARD STAGE</u>
Oriental rug	ALL gear except rug, music stands, and 3 guitar stands	3 guitar stands
Music stands (these belong to the BCT!)		

Programming artist-venue grid (Lee), early 2005 sketch

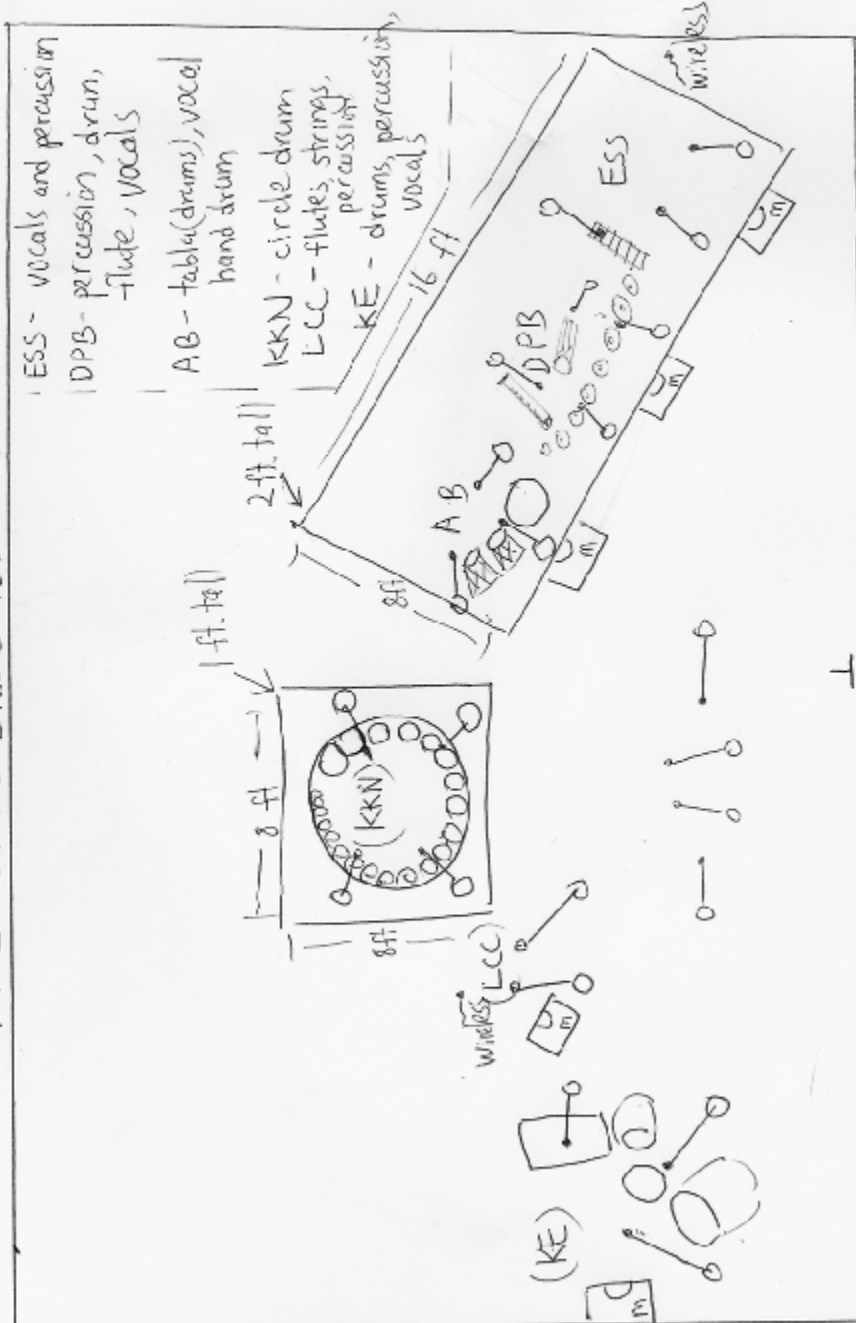
venues

	BCT	FUMC	UB Stage	Bluebird	FCC	MB Stage				
6:15	625	600	1000	400	275	500	3400	Napalm		6:15
6:30			700			250	2850	Zebra		6:30
6:45										6:45
7:00		Trade	Older							7:00
7:15			IC							7:15
7:30	Sidi					Take		Thudax		7:30
7:45	Combs		Stegobath		Leilis	Leilis		Plans		7:45
8:00	Game				Leilis	Trips		Scout		8:00
8:15								Another		8:15
8:30								Yuhui		8:30
8:45										8:45
9:00	Yuhui	Combs	Debra	Martine	Trio	Jasper				9:00
9:15	Lou				Yuhui	Leilis				9:15
9:30	Yuhui			Garment	Bobac					9:30
9:45		Leilis								9:45
10:00										10:00
10:15										10:15
10:30										10:30
10:45	Combs	Barb	Yoder		Leilis					10:45
11:00	Combs	Barb	Buena							11:00
11:15	Another					King				11:15
11:30			Yoder			Willie				11:30
11:45			Buena							11:45
12:00										12:00
12:15										12:15
12:30										12:30
12:45										12:45
1:00										1:00
1:15										1:15
1:30										1:30

Handwritten notes in the grid:

- 7:30: Thudax
- 7:45: Plans
- 8:00: Scout
- 8:15: Another
- 8:30: Yuhui
- 9:00: Jasper
- 9:15: Leilis
- 9:30: Bobac
- 9:45: King
- 10:00: Willie
- 10:30: Yoder
- 10:45: Buena
- 11:00: Yoder
- 11:15: Buena
- 11:30: Yoder
- 11:45: Buena

- • APPEX MUSIC ENSEMBLE



Sound! 23 microphones on boom stands | Lights:

- 2 wireless (1 instrumental, 1 vocal)
- 6 monitors

stage:

(1) $8 \times 8 \times 1$ platform
(1) $16 \times 8 \times 2$ platform

Sample artist technical rider: Badi Assad

TECHNICAL RIDER FOR BADI ASSAD

SOLO LINE UP

LINE-UP

Name	Function
ASSAD, BADI	Guitar & Voice
VAKROS, DIMITRIOS	Tourmanager

The following should be provided by PROMOTER at no cost to ARTIST:

1. DRESSING ROOM

set up 1 heatable and lockable dressing room with bathroom: **Badi Assad** (for 2 people)

- chairs, armchairs, macaws, mirror whole body.
- table with towels.
- toilet paper, paper towels, soap.
- flat iron (for clothes), ironing board
- silverwares, plates, glasses, cups, napkins.
- 4 white body/face towels.

catering:

- no dairy or red meat
- assorted kinds of coldcuts (smoked fish, turkey, etc)
- pâté (varied)
- organic / natural snacks
- breads basket (whole wheat / whole grain)
- fruits (apple, grapes, banana, peach) only fruits that don't need silverware
- raw vegetables + separate dips
- salad
- hot snacks: chicken, tuna and/or sushi

drinks:

- mineral water natural (glass, or small bottle) no gas (room temperature, with ice separate)
- tea (fruits + green)
- honey + sugar
- juices (orange)
- black coffee
- beer, wine

The dressing rooms should be ready at least at get in for sound check during sound check and performance there must be non-sparkling water on the stage. (the water for the sound check should be room temperatured!)

2. HOTEL

Rooming - List

Name	Room
ASSAD, BADI & VAKROS, DIMITRIOS	Double

Obs1: Room with private bathroom.

3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

P.A.

01 PA system compatible with the location of the event, processed and assisted. The PA should attain 110 DbA SPL throughout the concert location. It is preferable that it be a Fly P.A., if necessary use front fill and delay lines to achieve a better distributed, more homogeneous sound.

P.A. MIX

- ▶ 01 Console with parametric equalization, 4 auxiliaries (Yamaha, Sound Craft, Midas)
- ▶ 01 1/3 Octave stereo equalizer (BSS, Klark Teknik)
- ▶ 02 Compressors (DBX, Drawmer, Klark Teknik)
- ▶ 02 Effects processors (Lexicon PCM 80, Yamaha SPX 990)

MONITORS

The floor monitors should be capable of 400 Watts, to obtain better results. The channels' equalizers cannot be used as cascades. Venue may use same console for P.A. and Monitor.

- ▶ 03 Monitors (Meyer Sound, EAW)
- ▶ 01 32-band 1/3-octave stereo equalizer (BSS, Klark Teknik)

OBSERVATION

- ▶ If using a digital console, don't consider the peripherals, but this if the console will be compatible with the resources or either has at the very least 6 exits and 16 entrances and effects processors (Yamaha, DM 1000, 01V96)

MICROPHONES

- ▶ 01 SM 58 "wireless UHF"
- ▶ 01 SM 81
- ▶ 01 SM 58
- ▶ 01 AKG 411
- ▶ 02 Direct Box (Whirlwind, BSS)

SUPPORTS

- ▶ 02 Giraffe-type pedestals (1 long, 1 short)

CABLES AND CONNECTIONS

- 01 16-way balanced multicable
- 08 Microphone cables
- 02 P10/P10 mono cables
- 01 110 V power extension cords

BACKLINE

- 01 nylon string acoustic guitar (Six string)

INPUT LIST BADI ASSAD					
CANAL	INSTRUMENTS	MICROPHONES	INSERT P.A.	INSERT MON	SUPPORTS
01	GUITAR	DIRECT BOX	COMPRESSOR		
02	FLOOR GUITAR	SM 81			SHORT
03	KALIMBA	own			
04	VOICE BADI	own	COMPRESSOR		
05	RESERVE	UHF wireless			LONG
06	Speaking mic	SM 58			
07					
08					
09					
10					
11	PCM 80				
12	PCM 80				
13	SPX 990				
14	SPX 990				
15	CD PLAY				
16	CD PLAY				

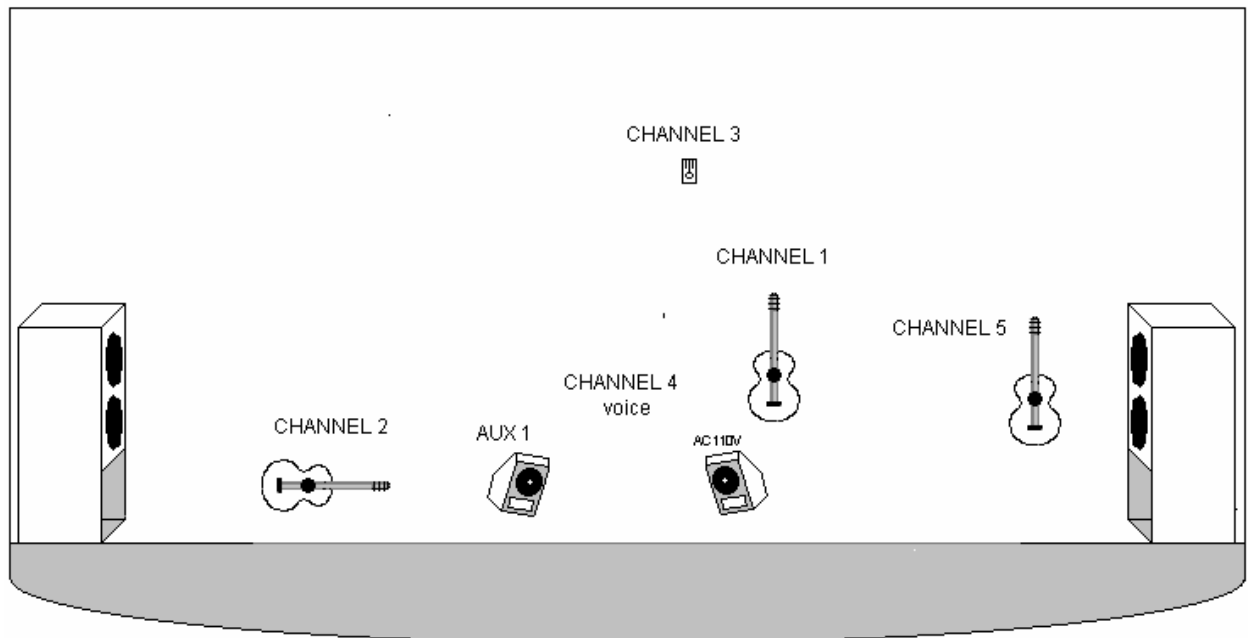
OBSERVATION

- ▶ Monitors should be connected to auxiliary channels 1 and 2.
- ▶ Minimum stage size 8 x 4 meters.
- ▶ Minimum time necessary for stage set up and sound check is 1 hour.

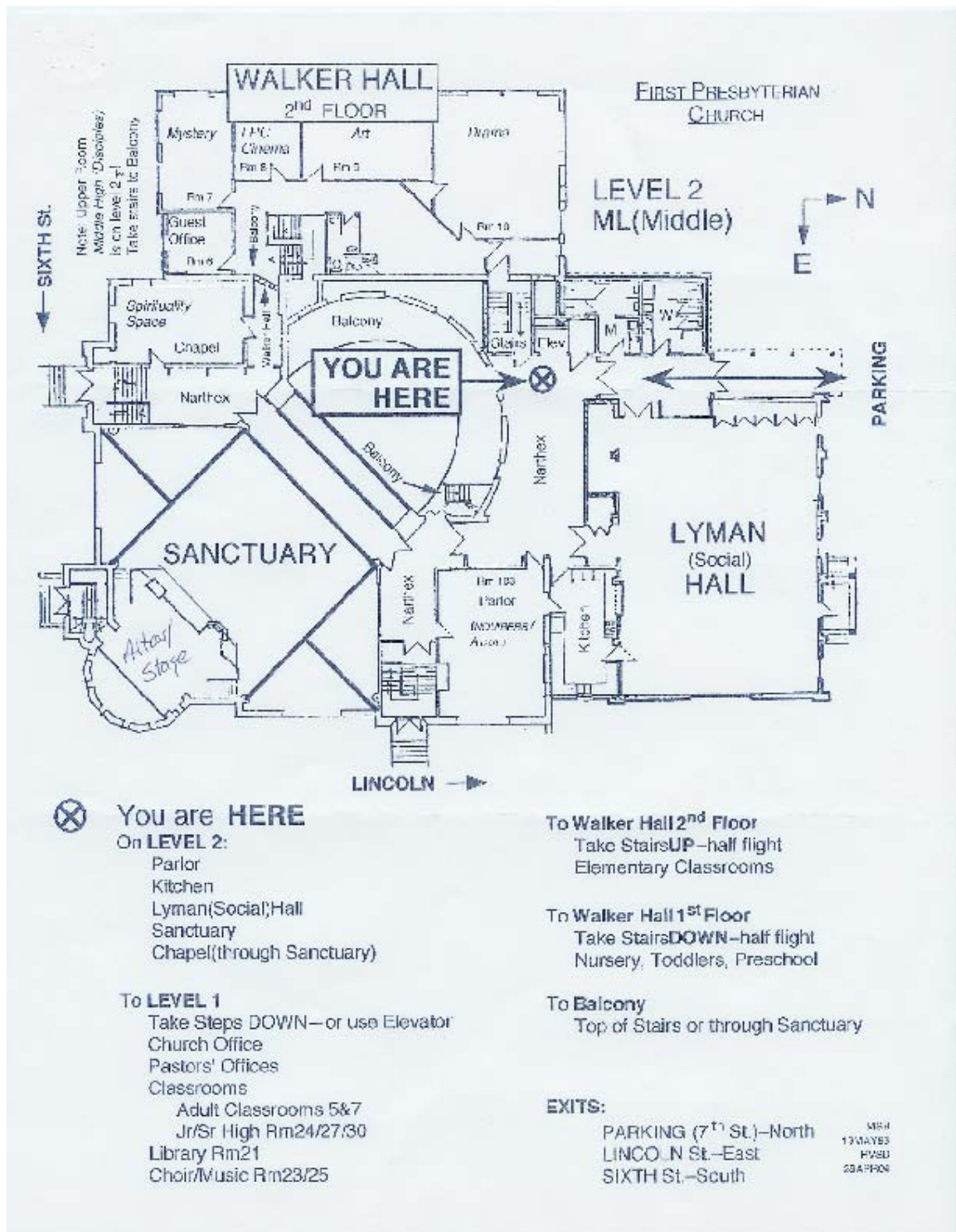
MISCELLANEOUS

- ▶ 6 batteries AA - 1,5 V for mic + guitar **(important!)**
- ▶ 3 batteries AA for the headset and one 9V for the guitar
- ▶ 1 white candle + matches

STAGE MAP BADI ASSAD - SOLO



Sample site plan: First Presbyterian Church



Sample site plan: 4th Street Stage (Monroe Bank Stage)





Performance Information

****Please plan to arrive at the stage at least 30 minutes before your performance and check in with the stage manager.****

****Due to Festival logistics, every artist may not get a sound check.****

Samarabalouf

Performances:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Time</u>
Friday 9/23	Bluebird	8:00 pm-9:00 pm
Friday 9/23	First Christian Church	10:45 pm-11:30 pm
Saturday 9/24	Bluebird	8:00 pm-9:00 pm
Saturday 9/24	First Presbyterian Church	10:45 pm-11:30 pm

(Please see website for venue descriptions and downloadable venue map.)

Load-ins and Soundchecks:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Load-in</u>	<u>Soundcheck</u>
Friday 9/23	First Christian Church	2:00 pm	2:15 pm-3:15 pm
Friday 9/23	Bluebird	4:30 pm	5:00 pm-6:00 pm
Saturday 9/24	Bluebird	4:15 pm (equipment only)	

(For performances with no scheduled soundcheck, you will be able to do a linecheck in the 30 minutes prior to your performance.)

Radio interviews: (Shows are 20-30 mins at most)

<u>Day</u>	<u>Station</u>	<u>Studio arr. time</u>	<u>On-Air time</u>
Friday 9/23	WFHB	12:45 pm	1:20 pm

Upon your arrival in Bloomington, please check in at the Artist Hospitality Room at the John Waldron Arts Center Auditorium (see website for downloadable directions). At the check-in site, you will receive a packet with important festival materials, information, and updates.

Transportation record: Airport pickups 2005

ARRIVALS						
Arrival day	Artist	Hotel	# of people	Arrival time	Details	Pickup location
Wednesday	Tim Eriksen	MC	1	4:46 PM	NW 502	IND
Wednesday	Ruthie Foster	MC	1	2:24 PM	UA 6850	IND
Wednesday	Samarababouf	MC	5	1:38 PM	UA 7575	IND
Wednesday	Maira Smiley	drop off at Sweeney Hall	1	approx. 2:30	NW 494	IND
Thursday	Dillon Bustin (part of Lotus Dickey Tribute)		1	8:11 PM	US AIR 11	IND
Thursday	Alkinoos Ioannidis	MC	8	10:20 PM	Southwest 941	IND
Friday	Justin Linam (part of Jake and Rachael's group)	MC	1	10:18 AM	US AIR 3147	IND
Friday	Ana Moura	MC	7	2:37 PM	AA 1284	IND
Friday	Badi Assad	MC	2	11:55 AM	Southwest 1524	IND
Friday	Sidi Goma	MC	13	12:25 PM		Greyhound bus station
Friday	Balkan Beat Box	MC	7	11:26 AM	US AIR 3263	IND
Friday	Lura	MC	9	11:55 AM	SW 1524	IND
Equipment notes						
minimal						
minimal						
personal luggage (5 to 7 pieces), 2 guitars and a double bass						
minimal; arrival transportation only (departing on her own)						
minimal; arrival transportation only						
two guitars, one cello in soft case (like guitar), case of 1.20 x 50 cm with electronics, 8 suitcases						
minimal						
8 suitcases and 3 guitars, plus personal bags						
1 large suitcase, 2 carry-on suitcases/duffels, and 1 guitar.						
A lot of luggage (about 30 pieces, none oversized); The main drum is collapsible and travels in a big (but not oversized bag) during airtravel. [However before performances it is set up to full size (approx 1.5m high, 45cm diam) and will have to be transported like this to/from performances.]						
I'd assume a 12-15 passenger van would be adequate for all passengers and gear.						

Wish list (Lee), early in the 2005 programming process

AFRICA

- Boubacar Traore 3
- Mahube
- Daara J 3
- Mamar Kassey
- Ramatou Diakite
- Waldemar Bastos
- Anadolu et Marignan
- CELTIC → Boubacar Traore - Scherlock / Roschke
- Shooglenifty —
- Dervish — Fred
- Lunasa —
- Flook —
- Teadra —
- Brock/McGuire Band — Fred
- Iarla O'Lionaird —
- Baka Beyond —

SOUTH AMERICAN

- Barbatuques 3?
- Monica Salmaso — quartet —
- Claudia Calderon — Columbia — Mexico — piano / instrumental
- Walter Roldan — Uruguay / accordion —
- Simon Diaz — Sinsur / Sinsur —
- Badi Assad
- Gurrufio — quintet? / acoustic — Venezuela
- ASIAN → Pedro Villalaz and Pedroband — Chile — jazz

- JaipurKawa Brass Band — The Triangulo — chamber music /
- Sidi Goma — touring
- Yungchen Lhamo — Hamilton de Holanda / Nido Mars Hall /
- Chirgilchin — cat / Aset re. woman
- Korean Dance (from Judy Mitoma)
- Cicala Mvnta — Japan brass band
- Yoshida Brothers — Japan — duo

EUROPE

- Ellika & Sdo —
- Martires del Compas — Spain —
- Pierre Bensusan
- Garmarna
- Frigg
- Samarabalour — French → touring
- Leilia — acapella
- Boris Kovac —
- Hradistan
- Vedaki
- Son de la Frontera —
- Enzo Avitable & Bottari — 20 piece
- Ano Moura — September
- Karpatt → may day
- Faltiguerra —

MIDDLE EAST

Abdullah Chadeh - Tourist in Qatar

Clotaire K

Trio Joubran - Palestine -

Sheik Ahmad Al-Tuni

Yasmin Levy - neotribal/avant/garage/hard

Cherifa - Moroccan -

LATIN AMERICAN/CARIBBEAN

Banda Manabers - Chicago

Tien Huicani

Bonga

Tania Libertad

Claudia Calderon

Celso Pine - Mexico

MULTIPLE COUNTRIES

Aurelio Martinez - Garifuna

Romolo Caprio - Belize

Ellika and Solo

Vedaki

US BASED

Yerba Buena

Omar Faruk Tekbilek

Charanga Cakewalk

Alicia Svigals

Spanish Harlem Orchestra

Zlatne Uste

Jake Shimabakuro

Wei and Betty Yang

Plena Libre

Mamadou Diabate

Beat the Donkey

Vishten (Canada)

Riffat Sultana & Party

Rob Curto's Forro for All

Golem

Maria de Barros

Pharoah's Daughter

Appendix C: Other festival and research documents

- *Artist roster and biographies from Lotus Festival 2005*
- *Board of Public Works resolution: Lotus street closings*
- *Comments left on the first Lotus Altar, 2002*
- *Press release for 2005 Lotus in the Park initiative*
- *Letter to business owners: 2005 Lotus street closings*
- *Research fieldnotes, 07/04/05: “Traditional” vs. “Modern” music at Lotus*
- *Street closings map, 2005*

Artist roster and biographies from Lotus Festival 2005

LOTUS WORLD MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL 2005
ARTIST ROSTER (from www.lotusfest.org)

APPEX: This unique collaborative is comprised of musicians who have participated in the UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance APPEX Fellowship programs. The ensemble includes Indian percussionist Abhijit Banerjee; Japanese-Hawaiian taiko drummer Kenny Endo; Balinese gamelan directors I Dewa Putu Perata and Emiko Susilo; Burmese musician Kyaw Kyaw Naing; and Chinese composer Liu Qi-Chao. Together, they develop original works and recast traditional melodies -- venturing into new creative territory. *With support from the Indiana University East Asian Studies Center.*

BADI ASSAD: Badi Assad [pronounced BAH-djee ah-SAHJ] is a new star of South American music. There is a percussive quality to both her vocals and her instrumentals -- and when she's not captivating audiences with her throaty voice, this young Brazilian diva is wowing them her guitar playing: "Guitar" magazine has described her as one of the most innovative guitarists in the world. Some songs tend towards Bossa Nova; others are completely unclassifiable, and on occasion she'll even reinvent a song by U2 or Bjork in a way that makes it a Badi original.

BALKAN BEAT BOX: Unless your local music store has a category "Multimedia Balkan & Middle Eastern Electronica Dance Happening," you may have difficulty finding a Balkan Beat Box CD. Horns, sampling, scratching; inventive vocals; relentless beats: BBB is all that, and more. This unclassifiable collective was formed by Israeli musicians Ori Kaplan and Tamir Muskat, and includes musicians from North Africa, the Middle East, and the Balkans.

CREOLE COWBOYS: Cajun and Zydeco music from southern Louisiana, powered by Jeffery Broussard's accordion. Also a member of the "nouveau Zydeco" band Zydeco Force, Jeffery adds R&B and funk to the mix. With guest fiddler/accordionist/singer Cedric Watson (pictured at left). You don't have to know how to two-step to get a kick out of the Creole Cowboys: just get up and dance.

MALCOLM DALGLISH: This Bloomington-based master musician plays hammer dulcimer, spoons, bones, chin, mouth, and has created some of the most beautiful vocal arrangements in the world. His work as a performer, choral composer and director, and teacher has taken him across the country and around the globe. Malcolm will be collaborating with Moira Smiley and Tim Eriksen in his Saturday night performance. *Sponsored by the IU Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies.*

RACHAEL DAVIS & JAKE ARMERDING: They sing and play together with an easy harmony. The simplicity and power of Rachael Davis's voice have made her one of the most talked-about performers in the world of American singer-songwriters. Gifted multi-instrumentalist Jake Armerding has built his original acoustic style (as a player, singer, and songwriter) on a foundation of folk and bluegrass. Rachael and Jake take a break from their solo performing to work as together -- with a full band -- in one of the best collaborations you'll ever hear.

LOTUS DICKEY TRIBUTE: Each year, the Lotus Dickey Tribute pays homage to Lotus Dickey (1911-89), the Indiana musician whose love of music and boundless creativity helped inspire the Lotus World Music Festival. This year's tribute includes Janne Henshaw, Grey Larsen, Mark Feddersen, Dillon Bustin, Nan McEntire, John Bealle, Rachael Davis and Tim Eriksen. All come together to interpret Lotus Dickey's music for new audiences and old fans alike. *Sponsored by ISU/The May Agency; South Dunn Street, represented by Brian Lappin Real Estate; and Friends of Old Time and Celtic Music.*

RUTHIE FOSTER: Ruthie Foster is a singer's singer: her powerful, inspiring performances have earned comparisons to Ella Fitzgerald and Aretha Franklin. A native of Texas, Ruthie grew up listening to blues, gospel, folk, and country music. That blend of influences is evident in her original songs, as well as her interpretations of classic gospel and folk tunes. An awe-inspiring artist, at the start of a great career. *Part of Women's Voices, sponsored by WFIU; IU Office of the VP for Institutional Development & Student Affairs.*

TIM ERIKSEN: From a diverse background (alt/folk/punk musician, ethnomusicologist), Tim Eriksen has made his reputation as a passionate advocate for and teacher of shape-note singing and the old songs that make up the fabric of American traditional folk music. The result: spare, arresting recordings of traditional songs as well as his own compositions. In 2003, he worked with the cast of the film "Cold Mountain" to train actors to sing shape-note. *Sponsored by Friends of Old Time and Celtic Music.*

FRIGG: Frigg's music is rich with the folk heritage of Finland and Norway -- and touches of American Appalachian and country & western. The group includes fiddles, mandola, cittern, double bass, guitar, and dobro. This young band dazzles (and they smile more than they do in their publicity photos). They were a surprise hit at last year's Lotus Festival, even though they played just one set. They're back this year to make more fans. Frigg includes three Järvelä siblings, members of Finland's great "fiddle dynasty." *Sponsored by the IU Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center.*

FUNKADESI: Funkadesi rocks ... and grooves ... and unites. This Lotus Festival favorite from the Windy City integrates East Indian music (Hindi film, folk, and classical) with reggae, funk, and Afro-Caribbean rhythms. The band members' cultural backgrounds are as diverse as the music, including Indian-American, Jamaican, African-American, European-American, and Latino heritages. A must for dance floor addicts. As U.S. Senator Barack Obama has said, "There's a lot of funk in that desi."

LOS GAUCHOS DE ROLDÁN: Accordion master Walter Roldán brings folkloric traditions of Uruguay to the Lotus Festival. He performs songs learned from his father and grandmother, as well as works of older accordionists who are now long gone. With his conjunto -- including guitars, dancers, and singers -- Roldán brings the music and dance of rural Uruguay to life, through polkas, waltzes, shotis, mazurkas, habaneras, tangos, and milongas. *Sponsored by the IU Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies.*

SARAH LEE GUTHRIE & JOHNNY IRION: Call it folk-country with a touch of rock and roll. Listen to Sarah Lee Guthrie and Johnny Irion [pronounced EYE-ree-un], and you might think of Emmylou Harris and Gram Parsons. Or Richard and Linda Thompson. As the grand-daughter of Woody Guthrie (and the daughter of Arlo), Sarah Lee is thoroughly at home in all those traditions. Johnny's history is in the southern indie/rock scene, and his warm voice makes even the sad songs sound friendly. Their personal and professional collaboration (they are also married) has produced fine original music. *With support from the Friends of Old Time and Celtic Music.*

ALKINOOS IOANNIDIS: Alkinoos Ioannidis' songs often begin quietly... and build relentlessly. So it has been with his career. Born and raised in Nicosia, Cyprus, Ioannidis has become a hit recently, touring throughout Europe with little more than his steel-string guitar. His songs are influenced by traditional music, but some of them have an equal measure of rock and roll. His assertive vibrato can rise to chants that stir the soul. *Sponsored by IU West European Studies.*

KING WILKIE: Hailing from Nashville, the six pickers of King Wilkie serve up bluegrass as crisp as their starched white shirts. Driven by a speedy banjo and mandolin, these tunes have a twang that makes them sound a century older than they are. And while most of the songs are King Wilkie originals about ramshackle shacks and lonesome times, don't be surprised if you hear a

traditional ballad from the likes of Bill Monroe. *With support from the Friends of Old Time and Celtic Music.*

KUSUN ENSEMBLE: The 11-member Kusun Ensemble comes to Bloomington from Ghana. Their high-energy performances derive from the exuberance of African hi-life music (with its brassy jazz influences), and traditional Ghanaian instrumentation, rhythms, and dance. Founder Nii Tettey Tetteh calls what the ensemble does a new style of music, "Nokoko." The ensemble includes artists who have performed with the National Ballet of Ghana and the Pan African Orchestra. *Sponsored by IU African Studies Program.*

LURA: Like Césaria Évora, Lura is bringing the music of the Cape Verde Islands -- with its roots in Portuguese and West African cultures -- to a wider world. She handles folk, soul, and jazz with equal ease, and performs the accordion-driven "funana" and the sensual "batuku," a style that emerged from women's communal song improvisations. Born in Lisbon of Cape Verdean parents, Lura learned the Portuguese creole of Cape Verde, often writing and singing in this beautiful language. *Sponsored by IU African Studies Program.*

MAMAR KASSEY: The members of Mamar Kassey have become significant musical ambassadors of the desert nation of Niger, bringing their blend of ancient and modern sounds to audiences across the globe. This is their second appearance at a Lotus Festival. Rooted in Fulani, Hausa, Songhai, and Djerma traditions, their exuberant, high-intensity music makes the dance floor a must. *Sponsored by IU African Studies Program.*

ANA MOURA: At 25, Ana Moura is a leading voice of the traditional, sensual Portuguese music known as fado. With the presence of an opera diva, Moura sings fado with one of the best voices in Europe. Supported by the venerable Jorge Fernando (who has been playing classical guitar longer than most of us have been alive), Moura has built a career on modernizing fado -- updating the lyrics and themes to keep them relevant to her generation. *Sponsored by IU West European Studies.*

NAWAL: Nawal comes to the Lotus Festival from her home in France -- but her music comes from her native Comoros Islands, off the eastern coast of Africa. Her soulful music draws on her background as a Muslim woman growing up in diverse cultures, and includes Bantu rhythms and Sufi mysticism. She is a powerful singer and guitarist, and her trio includes the Comorian gambusi (similar to oud), daf (frame drum), and mbira (thumb piano). *Sponsored by the IU African Studies Program.*

PLENA LIBRE: What's the best way to enjoy Plena Libre? On your feet. Outrageously upbeat and danceable (extremely), the music of this seven-piece group from Puerto Rico combines brassy arrangements, percussion, and masterful plena, the traditional song form of Puerto Rico. Not so long ago, plena was considered primarily a folkloric genre -- news and stories sung to bouncy percussion -- but in the hands of Plena Libre, it grooves. *Sponsored by Indiana University Union Board; additional support from the IU Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.*

SAMARABALOUF: This combo from France (guitars, bass, and accordion) channels the spirit of Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt. Playing with humor, virtuosity, and break-neck speed, Samarabalouf plays original music that is a salute to the Reinhardt tradition. With guitarist François Petit, rhythm guitarist Pierre Margerin, bassist Luc Ambry, and accordionist Arnaud Van Lancker. *Sponsored by IU West European Studies.*

SEU JORGE: From a Rio favela (slum) to the big screen: If you saw the 2004 Wes Anderson film "The Life Aquatic," you saw Brazilian pop star Seu Jorge ("Mr. George"): he played guitar and sang Portuguese covers of David Bowie songs. (He also played a slum mobster in the acclaimed Brazilian film "City of God.") By turns gravelly, breezy, and soulful, his vocal style opens a window to fresh takes on samba and bossa nova -- not to mention the odd rock or pop classic. *Sponsored by the IU Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies.*

JAKE SHIMABUKURO: If you think you know what a ukelele sounds like, think again. Jake Shimabukuro takes the uke where no one has gone before -- strumming, plucking, distorting, and making this elegant little instrument sing. And he has been active in U.S.-Japan cultural relations: In 2004, Jake was designated Hawaii's Goodwill Ambassador to Japan. "I love what I do," Jake says. It shows.

SIDI GOMA: Drummers, chanters, rattle players, and acrobatic dancers: these are the Black Sufis of Gujarat. Their ancestors came to India from East Africa centuries ago; they perform sacred music and dance dedicated to the Black Sufi saint, Bava Gor. The presentation is dramatic and arresting: painted faces, and unique song fusions of African and Indian traditions. Their expressive interactions with the audience, and the joy and controlled abandon of their dance, make Sidi Goma performances unforgettable.

TÉADA: If there's one thing that traditional Irish music must be, it's virtuosic. Téada is that, and more. The group -- fiddlers, flute and whistle, banjo, bodhran, guitar, accordion -- have polished Irish pub music without losing its soul. Whether Téada is playing tunes or singing songs, the light, ancient melodies speak volumes about Irish history and character. *Sponsored by Friends of Old Time and Celtic Music.*

TLEN HUICANI: Tlen-Huicani's traditional Mexican melodies are built around the folk harp, played with heartfelt precision by Alberto de la Rosa and complemented by an array of acoustic guitars. Their repertoire comes from Veracruz, and includes romantic, lyrical tunes, as well as up-tempo songs that may lure you to the dance floor. Tlen-Huicani has spent 30 years touring Latin America, and is not shy about showing off the best of Peruvian, Chilean, and Columbian music. *Sponsored by the Indiana University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.*

TRIO JOUBRAN: Born in Nazareth, Brothers Samir, Wissam, and Adnan Joubran bring virtuoso passion to the oud, or Arabic lute. Drawing on Palestinian, flamenco, and Byzantine styles, they create a sound that is both global -- calling forth ancient traditions -- and intimate. Wissam, who built the instruments they play, is a luthier (a graduate of the Antonio Stradivarius Institute in Cremona). "The oud may be a 4,000-year-old-instrument," says Samir, "but it can still be played with youthful spirit."

VOCO: At least one-fifth of Voco will be familiar to Lotus audiences. Founder Moira Smiley is a gifted vocalist, and was a member of the a cappella group Vida. Voco combines beautiful mouth music with body percussion, banjo, and bass. "...truly phenomenal combining the energy of urban street singing with first-rate musicianship and folk roots and traditions from around the world" (Folkworks Magazine). Smiley is joined by Jess Basta, Christine Enns, Jessica Catron, and John Ballinger.

THE WAILIN' JENNYS: Soprano Ruth Moody, mezzo Nicky Mehta, and alto Annabelle Chvostek are the Jennys, a vocal trio whose harmonies are regularly described as soulful, sublime, exquisite. You get the picture. Their rootsy songs are a mix of the original and the traditional, with a focus on harmony and intricate instrumentals. *Part of Women's Voices, sponsored by WFIU.*

Board of Public Works resolution: Lotus street closings

**RESOLUTION 2005-44
LOTUS WORLD MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL**

WHEREAS, the Board of Public Works is empowered by I.C. 36-9-6-2 to supervise City Streets; and

WHEREAS, the Lotus Education and Arts Foundation, Inc., ("Lotus") will be presenting events throughout the downtown that provide a respectful and exciting environment for artists and audiences, and that offer opportunities for people to experience, celebrate and learn about the diversity of the world's cultures; and

WHEREAS, the local site committee, hereinafter referred to as "Sponsors," have requested that the Board close certain streets in downtown Bloomington to vehicular traffic and other traffic so that Lotus can have control over the streets for the following purposes: to establish an information center; to allow the sale of tickets for entrance to performance venues, including the closed streets; to offer for sale or inspection artists' merchandise and CD's; to sell food and beverages; and to serve as entertainment venues from Thursday, September 22 through Saturday, September 24, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the Sponsors have agreed to indemnify and to hold harmless the City of Bloomington, City of Bloomington Board of Public Works or any of their agents or employees for any and all actions, losses or claims arising from said event, and has agreed to provide the City with a Certificate of Insurance, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the City of Bloomington Board of Public Works declares that certain areas of streets in downtown Bloomington which are noted on Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference, will be temporarily closed to vehicular and other traffic according to the dates and times noted on Exhibit A.
2. That the Street closures outlined above are for the following purposes: to allow Lotus and the Sponsors to maintain control over the closed areas of the streets in order: to establish an information center; to allow for the sale of tickets for entrance to performance venues, including the closed streets; to offer for sale or inspection artists' merchandise and CD's; to sell food and beverages; to exercise control and authorization over the artists, performers, craftsmen, craftswomen, and vendors who are a part of the Lotus events; to enable Lotus to acquire the insurance coverage required by this Resolution; and to serve as entertainment venues from Thursday, September 22 through Saturday, September 24, 2005.

3. That artists, performers, craftsmen, craftswomen and vendors who have not received explicit authorization from Lotus or the Sponsors, or their representatives or agents, to participate in the Lotus Festival, shall not be permitted to utilize the closed off portions of the streets listed on Exhibit A for the purposes of performing, displaying, producing or selling items or goods.
4. That by approval of this Resolution, the President of the Board of Public Works is authorized to sign the attached Release, Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreement.
5. That by approval of this Resolution the City noise ordinance is also waived for this event.
6. That in addition to agreeing to the above-restrictions, Sponsors have agreed to the following, as evidenced by the signature of their representative below:
 - A. North/South traffic will be free to flow through intersections of Grant, Lincoln and Washington until 6:00 p.m. on Friday and until noon on Saturday and parking lots for all banks on Kirkwood will be accessible before 6:00 p.m. on Friday and noon on Saturday. Traffic may come and go from the 4th Street Garage at all times.
 - B. Sponsors will clean up the street both before and after the event. The clean-up shall include, but not be limited to, removal of temporary "no parking" signs, picking up litter, sweeping any broken glass and the placing, emptying and removal of trash cans. Clean-up after the event shall be completed by 8:00 a.m., Sunday, September 25, 2005.
 - C. Sponsors will be responsible for placing barricades for street closings and to remove barricades by 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 25, and to post "no parking" signs according to City Ordinance. The City of Bloomington is not responsible for providing or placement of barricades and traffic cones.
 - D. To be responsible for obtaining any required permits or licenses.
 - E. To notify all concerns with the blocks of the activities.
 - F. To notify Police and Fire Departments and the press of the street closing at least 48 hours in advance of the closing.

ADOPTED THIS __ DAY OF _____, 2005.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

Comments left on the first Lotus Altar, 2002

A comment relative to Bloomington's priceless event – THE LOTUS FESTIVAL —
Lotus, for me, is an elixir that transports one back from old age to a younger time of limitless opportunities and beckoning frontiers. It is memory's revisitation of Scotland's loughs, Ireland's glens, the Caribbean's beaches, Italy's grand canal and Piazza San Marco, our southland's bayous and life's vibrance in the world's diverse and admirable nations. All people share dreams, joy, sorrow, hopes, music, accomplishments, tribulations, beauty, birth, and death. All people are creative, all people are feeling. Lotus causes me to feel what I have written. VIVA LA LOTUS. – Jim Mahan

I enjoy the spirit of music and life. Thanks to everyone who makes this possible!!

Lotus makes magic happen! Thanx.

Lotus = love

Long live Lotus!

I wish Lotus Dickey was here to see this.

Janis Ian is a powerful woman who has now blessed this town! Ah!

I like Lotus Festival – Avishai Leizarowitz, Israel

Girls dancing cha-cha to the Gangbe Brass Band.

Music moves the universe – there is love.

Lotus is JOY!

May the world have the causes of happiness and happiness itself. Sometimes what we want isn't what we need – can we know the difference. –much love, ARC

Music is peace.

We are all one.

Today I stopped, I paused, I enjoyed. I think I will stay in this place for a while longer.

Synchrony.

I just got here and I love it. Thank you!

Janis Ian rocked all who were in attendance.

I believe Bloomington can be beautiful.

Lotus Spirit.

Lotus manifests the oneness of humanity as God created us. This is the happiest crowd I've seen outside of a mass religious experience. It is a religious experience.

Thanks for the taste of many cultures. I was free from the bubble for just a little while.

Lotus is the best of Bloomington. Long live Lotus!

Nothing is more important than today!

Thank you Lotus for being so inspiring!

Can't stop moving my hips. Life as a drum.

Lotus is a beautiful thing of Bloomington!

The diversity and openness of this community always astounds me when I see it renewed and expanded at Lotus Festival each year. Thanks.

Lotus Prayer: May this soulful, eclectic, beautiful music festival forever bond the Bloomington community of artistic, creative, visionary people. May we drink in this music and art and be fortified as we work and play to heal and grow as humans on Earth.

Love is why we are here.

We're very lucky to have this awesome energy in our town!

I came here three years ago sad and scared after my divorce and felt at home, rejuvenated, and renewed. These long years later my life has finally come in synchrony with that moment, and I am here again celebrating the journey. Thank you for the vision and the hope!

This is a religious pilgrimage of joy!

This is my first "Lotus Experience". It was spiritual. The caliber of musician was cream. Thanks for all of the hard work and organization! Long live Lotus!!

May music always be in our hearts. Love ya Lotus!

I love my community. That means you!

Lotus rocks really hard!

Music = heart connection = peaceful harmony Thank you for joining us together.

Thank you Lotus-opolis!

A beautiful boy walked into my life. He introduced me to Lotus and a world I never knew before. He is an angel.

Lotus whirls!

I'm in love with everyone tonight!

At the Lotus Dickey tribute Bloomington hippies from the seventies have mellowed into stately mellifluous folkies. Thanks for the trip back!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2005

**City of Bloomington And Indiana University Team Up
With Lotus To Launch New Family Event**

Bloomington, IN — Mayor Mark Kruzan announced today that a new partnership among the City of Bloomington, Indiana University and the Lotus Education & Arts Foundation will expand the Lotus Festival's free public programming for families. The City is committing \$15,000 to Lotus for a new event, called "Lotus in the Park," which will be held during the Lotus Festival this fall.

"The City of Bloomington is committed to aggressively promoting the arts as economic development, and this event is the absolute archetype of that," Kruzan said. "Lotus in the Park will provide an opportunity for community families of all walks of life and income levels to experience the excitement, culture and inspiration celebrated by the Lotus Festival."

Lotus in the Park will be a new component of the annual Lotus World Music and Arts Festival. It will be free and open to the public, and will take place Saturday, September 24, from approximately 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (exact times to be announced), at Third Street Park, Bloomington.

"Attending the Lotus World Music & Arts Festival in Bloomington is a one-of-a-kind experience in Indiana," Kruzan said. "It is the City's goal through our financial commitment — and through teaming up with a great nonprofit such as Lotus, and also with the City Council, Indiana University and event sponsor the *Herald-Times* — to offer this experience to all citizens, old and young, to enjoy."

The event will feature performances by Lotus Festival artists from around the world on the *Herald-Times* Stage including The Lotus Dickey Tribute; Sidi Goma (Black Sufis of Gujarat, India); and Sarah Lee Guthrie and Johnny Irion (Guthrie is the granddaughter of Woody Guthrie and daughter of Arlo Guthrie). Additionally, hands-on art-making and workshops will be held at the IU Global Education Pavilion. A Children's Procession will cap the day and segue into the evening's festival schedule. The procession will move via sidewalks and through closed streets, from Third Street Park to Kirkwood Avenue and Festival Headquarters.

The IU Global Education Pavilion will house educational programming featuring festival artist workshops and presentations. The tentative pavilion schedule

includes a “kecak,” or Balinese monkey-chant singalong taught by the APPEX Ensemble (Asia Pacific Performance Exchange); and Sacred Harp singing with Tim Eriksen, acclaimed shape-note singer who directed the old-time singing for the film “Cold Mountain.”

“Indiana University is pleased to announce the creation of the IU Global Education Pavilion at Lotus in the Park,” said Patrick O’Meara, IU Dean of the Office of International Programs. “From the beginning of Lotus, Indiana University has had close ties to the festival, through its faculty, graduate students, study centers and programs. IU’s participation in Lotus programming has presented unique opportunities to further IU’s educational outreach in the Bloomington community.”

The Pavilion is made possible by funding from: the Center for the Study of Global Change, the Office of Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculties and the Office of International Programs.

Lee Williams, Lotus Executive and Artistic Director, said he is excited about this new event.

“Our successes so far, and the unique character of Lotus events, are tributes to the generosity of Bloomington,” Williams said. “We’re excited to be able to give back to our community in this way, and we’re very proud to be officially partnering with the City for this project.”

Earlier this year, the City Council approved a new “Promotion of Business” line item in the mayoral budget. Included in that budget are funds to promote the arts and arts organizations, such as the Lotus Education and Arts Foundation, as business and as economic developers.

Letter to business owners: 2005 Lotus street closings

20 July 2005

Dear Downtown Business Owner:

The 12th annual Lotus World Music and Arts Festival will be held September 22–25, 2005, and we look forward to another year in downtown Bloomington. Much of the event's success is attributable to our community, and once again we expect to draw thousands of people to the lively and pedestrian-friendly downtown.

From past festivals, we know that over the course of the event, 6,000 to 7,000 people visit downtown Bloomington, not only to experience the Lotus Festival, but also to patronize our downtown businesses. Lotus patrons — many from out of town — come early in the afternoon to get their bearings before the evening festivities start, and they spend a lot of time exploring the streets around the courthouse, browsing in stores, and stopping into restaurants for a quick bite.

To create a festive and safe atmosphere on the street during official festival hours, we are proposing the following street closings.

- From 12 Noon on Thursday, 9/22, until 2 a.m. on Sunday, 9/25:
 - Kirkwood Avenue between Walnut and Washington St.
 - Sixth St between Walnut and Washington St, with no sidewalk access from 7pm to midnight, excepting to residences and businesses.
- From 8 a.m. on Friday, 9/23, until 8 a.m. on Sunday, 9/25:
 - Fourth St between Walnut St and College Ave, with no sidewalk access from 7pm to midnight on the west half of the block, excepting access to residences and businesses. The Fourth St parking garage shall remain open and accessible.
- From Noon on Friday, 9/23, until 2 a.m. on Sunday, 9/25:
 - Kirkwood Avenue between Washington and Lincoln St
- From 6 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. on Friday, 9/23 and Saturday, 9/24:
 - Washington St between 7th and 4th St
 - Sixth St between Washington and Lincoln St
 - Walnut St between 4th St and Kirkwood Avenue

The Board of Public Works will evaluate our proposal on August 23 in City Hall. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to call Lee Williams, Executive Director (336-6599) or to attend the Board of Public Works' meeting. You can also phone the Board of Public Works at 349-3410 or write them at P.O. Box 100, 47402.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to bringing the Lotus Festival to downtown Bloomington for another exciting weekend in September.

Sincerely,

Lee Williams
Executive Director

Research fieldnotes, 07/04/05: “Traditional” vs. “Modern” music at Lotus

. . . Lee characterized the relationship between “traditional” and “modern” in terms of a balance rather than a situation of “versus”...many people love both. He tries not to take it too seriously...he feels that he solves any potential conflict or criticism through sheer volume....there are approximately 35 artists at any given festival, so if you don't like one than you can go see another! He is fully aware that he is not representing every aspect of a given country/region/ethnicity's musical culture at a single festival...that people get frustrated, i.e. if you're from a particular country and wonder “why are you bringing that, it's what my parents listen to and it's boring”....but a group is just one group, not a representation of a whole country...next year it might be a modern group, and it's not practical to try to do it all, traditional and modern from every culture. He does recognize the need to be sensitive, and he acknowledges that some people like traditional music, traditional instruments only, and acoustic music, and they don't understand why Lotus would find it appealing to have these other instruments playing this music when there's a way of doing it that's been passed down from generation to generation. Lee feels, however, that these are growing traditions, not stagnant ones, that need to continue to expand and grow...over generations and by picking up new listeners and participants...and that listeners need to understand why they're doing what they're doing, instead of just being critical. For example, he thinks it's hilarious that what was considered “cutting edge” and “crazy” in Irish music 25-30 years ago...influenced by rock music, often...is now what's considered “traditional.” Lee tries to view it all from the point of view of history and know that these are just reflections on current generations...he's not here to make judgments, he's here to present music to people and see how they take it...some will love it, some won't.

He realizes that he has his own biases, too. For example, he's noticed that he seems inclined to represent Middle Eastern music in its more traditional forms. Can't explain why...he thinks this might have something to do with being sensitive to current world issues and that perhaps he wants to show the deep levels and hundreds of years of musical dedication and culture in that region...? Or not. In terms of “appeal to his audience,” he's gotten a range of feedback on his programming choices, overall, both praise and criticism, across the board.

[Here LuAnne joined the conversation.] Relationship is “ever-changing”... “one person's modern is another person's new traditional!” Lee gave the example of an artist like Leila Downs (sp?) who mixes Mexican folk styles with operatic styles and jazz...Lee loves it, while some people find it just “wrong”...but maybe they'll book a different Mexican artist the next year, and “we're not the ones creating it...we're bringing these artists and allowing you to see them.”

Any perceived incongruity with mission? Lee felt that people who feel like this are usually the ones who prefer traditional, acoustic music, where you're more connected to the past, historically, transmitted over generations...being connected, in that sense of being involved in the folk music of that world, not moving away from that into a more “commercialized” version that seems less representative of the “true” culture. LuAnne thought the idea that Lotus is “supposed” to program certain types of music comes from people taking ownership of the festival, especially long-time audience members [and imposing their own preferences]. But she noted that even from the beginning, Lotus has had amplified music and a wide range of artists. She learned that her own idea of “world music” used to be pretty narrow and “ethnographic, folk”-oriented...but over the years she has observed how musicians seem “voracious” about listening to other music from other cultures and “making connections,” finding them in a lot of places...even musicians that play “traditional” music. She thought that people who get upset when they hear things that don't seem appropriate to the Lotus “mission” are often making a rather “arrogant” assumption about what someone else's tradition may be...that tradition isn't “locked in a bottle with all the air sucked out of it.” Musicians today have so much access to all kinds of art and music, from everywhere, and even the most strongly-rooted artists pull other musicians up on stage, borrow. “The harder you try to draw boundaries, the more permeable they seem to become...and the

harder you try to keep those boundaries solid, the more frustrated you're going to be...because if you want to listen to just one kind of music, sit around a listen to a CD from the Smithsonian." Often complaints translate into "it's not what I want to hear, it's not what I expect"...and a lot of this stuff defies expectations because it's a living, breathing art that we have no control over.

Lee commented that if all you want to hear is traditional music, then you're going to hear a repertoire that is set, that people are "rehashing" for generations [not sure I agree, but whatever]. But at some point, musicians will "burst out"...they "don't want to be confined." LuAnne noted that since she doesn't have very "prescriptive" ideas about what would be "unthinkable," musically, that she is able to connect on a more emotional level. For example, a group like Väsen is composing within a tradition...doing things that are extremely creative but still carrying the tradition forward. Lee added that the new doesn't replace the old...that it's a growing tradition, and he can bring both. LuAnne agreed that perhaps the strong feelings equal fear...fear that the new is doing away with the old.

Lee felt that most people are not really well-versed in what "traditional" is...you need to be SO knowledgeable, and things that you think are traditional might only be 50 years old (he gave the example of the bouzouki in Irish music). He thought that some people are "purists" in that they think music should be unamplified/acoustic...the louder it is, the further it is from what THEY want to hear, and so they are stuck in one way of presenting. He felt that amplified is not any better or worse, just different.

Lee thought that a very large percentage of the Lotus audience don't talk about traditional/modern...they just go to see music because there are no opportunities to see these genres in other places. They have a "visceral"-level appreciation, rather than an academic sense...do they like it or not? The average consumer doesn't analyze things like an ethnomusicologist. Lee himself tries not to let these academic considerations distract him at all. Ultimately, he goes on what he sees and hears...the "instant" (or somewhat more involved) analysis of to book or not...although sometimes he does have the trad/mod conversation with himself! He prides himself, to some extent, on reading materials and getting the best possible sense of what an artist is doing.

Basically, though, his programming decisions depend on who's in the large pool of touring artists. He doesn't feel like he's "curating" or going by a set of intellectual principles and choosing according...noting that you can't do this unless you have a lot of money! In his mind, the strong opinions of audience members show that people really care about the festival...that they feel connected and have a sense of ownership.



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Personal Interviews

- Addison, Loraine. 18 November 2003. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.
- Alano, Danise. 6 July 2005. Digital audio recording.
- Anderson-Turner, Jessica and Steve Turner. 20 October 2004. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.
- Combs, James. 6 February 2005. Phone interview. Digital audio recording.
- Daneshgar, Shahyar. 15 March 2005. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.
- Gaskill, Sally and Nancy Kreuger. 18 November 2004. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.
- Holladay, LuAnne. 4 November 2003, 31 March 2005. Digital audio recordings.
- Jeringan, Tina M. 13 July 2005. Digital audio recording.

Klein, Deborah. 11 November 2003. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.

Ksander, Yaël. 9 September, 4 October 2004. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recordings.

Loewenthal, Tamara. 11 July 2005. Digital audio recording.

Manion, Jim. 9 August 2005. Digital audio recording.

McEntire, Nancy C. 1 July 2005. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.

Miyake, Mark. 27 September 2004. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.

Reynolds, Shawn. 7 July 2005. Digital audio recording.

Rosenfeld, Malke. 6 April 2005. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.

Schaich, Lucy. 8 August 2005. Digital audio recording.

St. John, Karin. 5 July 2005. Digital audio recording.

Vietze, Dmitri. 8 October 2004. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recording.

Williams, Lee. 4 November 2003; 19 October, 12 November, 19 November, 3 December, 10 December, 17 December 2004; 14 January, 4 March, 17 March, 25 March, 1 April, 7 April, 15 April, 21 April, 5 May, 27 May, 3 June, 11 August 2005. Bloomington, Indiana. Digital audio recordings.

Meeting Participants

Loraine Addison

Kaye Beavers

John Byers

Jeffrey Cannon

Patrick Coad

Daniel Comiskey

Kate Ferrucci

Jeff Gold

LuAnne Holladay

William E. Holladay

Brandi Host

Terry Howe

Lewis Johnson

Jillian Kinzie

John R. Lawson

Julia Karin Lawson

Cindy Levindofske

Tamara Loewenthal

Sarah Noggle

Brian L. Richwine

Malke Rosenfeld

Lucy Schaich

Daniel S. Shaffer

Jenifer Shepherd

Michael Valliant

Lee Williams

SUNNI M. FASS

EDUCATION

- May 2006** **PhD, Folklore**
PhD Minor: Anthropology
Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
- Qualifying exam: Passed with distinction, 30 September 2004
 - Dissertation: “The 2005 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival: Processes of Production and the Construction of Spatial Liminality”
- October 2003** **MA, Folklore**
Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
- Thesis: “‘Cultural Resonance: Interpreting Musical Instruments’: A Critical Analysis of the Curatorial Process”
- May 1997** **BA, English**
Minor: Music
Magna cum Laude
The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia
- Secondary Education certification, English
 - Advanced Studies in England, Bath, U.K., with University College, Oxford

EXHIBITIONS

- 2004** **Curator**
“African American Arts Institute: Celebrating 30 Years”
African American Arts Institute, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
November 2004
- 2003** **Curator**
“Cultural Resonance: Interpreting Musical Instruments”
Mathers Museum of World Cultures, Bloomington, Indiana
September to December 2003
- 2002** **Curator**
“Dress Codes: Wearing Identity”
Mathers Museum of World Cultures, Bloomington, Indiana
September 2002 to December 2003

EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

- 2002-05** **Managing Editor**
Burnim, Mellonee V. and Portia K. Maultsby, eds. *African American Music: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Coordinated production process for textbook. Included editing content, performing all copyediting and formatting, communicating with editors and 30 contributing

authors, pursuing licenses for copyrighted material, and compiling all bibliographic resources.

- 2005-present Style Editor and Graduate Assistant**
EVIA Digital Archive (Ethnomusicological Video for Instruction and Analysis)
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
- Develop and implement editorial guidelines specific to needs of innovative digital archive project.
 - Brainstorm possibilities for end-user content and interface.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2002-present Visitor Services Representative**
Mathers Museum of World Cultures
Bloomington, Indiana
- Greet museum visitors and provide all information as needed; sole staff presence in museum on weekends.
 - Manage museum store sales and track transactions and inventory.
 - Open and close museum, including responsibility for all locks, alarm systems, and the maintenance of security in all museum areas.
 - Keep records of visitor demographics.
 - Supervise museum special events.

- 2004-2005 Festival Production Assistant**
The Lotus Education and Arts Foundation
Bloomington, Indiana
- Performance, logistic, and publicity coordinator for Lotus World Music and Arts Festival, a four-day event featuring more than 30 performing groups.
 - Primary artist liaison, with significant responsibilities in all phases of large-scale public programming.
 - Chaired committee for festival backline and technical needs; member of committees for publicity and volunteer management.

- 2003 Assistant to the Museum Registrar**
Mathers Museum of World Cultures
Bloomington, Indiana
- Catalogued and assisted with the accession of a new musical instrument collection comprising more than 150 artifacts.

- 2002-03 President, Ethnomusicology Students' Association**
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
- Founded ESA Professional Development Series.
 - Produced 2002 and 2003 Lotus Blossoms/ESA Workshop Series, in conjunction with Lotus Arts and Education Foundation.
 - Made successful application for approximately \$3000 in total grant awards for ESA events, from various Indiana University funding sources.

- 2002 Music Consultant, "At Journey's Edge"**
Donna Lawrence Productions, for the Lewis & Clark State Historic Site
Hartford, Illinois

- Conducted in-depth background research and presented final recommendations regarding historically-accurate/appropriate music for film soundtrack. Film was contracted by the site, the first stop on the National Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail, to introduce visitors to its historic significance as the 1803-1804 staging point for the Lewis and Clark voyage.

2000-01

Festival Volunteer Coordinator

National Council for the Traditional Arts, Silver Spring, Maryland

- Recruited, trained, and organized more than 400 volunteers to run the Washington Irish Festival.
- Established volunteer database and created format for managing volunteers electronically.
- Built relationships with community agencies to promote festivals and other NCTA activities.
- Worked with cooperating/affiliated organizations to organize volunteers for other festivals outside the DC-Metro area.
- Compiled biographies/discographies and other materials on a variety of artists, for use in booking events, reviewing new performers, and preparing event publications.
- Assisted in writing grant proposals and grant reports.

Summer 2000

Education Volunteer, “Music in the Age of Confucius”

Sackler Gallery of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

- Assisted with educational and interpretive programs for children, in association with exhibit showcasing musical instruments and traditions of ancient China.

1999-2000

Executive/Research Assistant to the Senior Vice President

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington, D.C.

- Represented AEI and the office of the Vice President in relations with media, corporate donors, scholars, government offices, and other high-level entities.
- Conducted Internet and library research on timely international issues.
- Planned and implemented conferences on various topics for up to 300 participants. Prepared meeting and conference materials.
- Maintained records of donor contributions and general information using AEI’s marketing and fundraising database. Analyzed donor histories and made recommendations.

1997-1999

TEFL Volunteer, China (PRC)

United States Peace Corps

- Designed and led classes 14-16 hours/week in Oral English, Listening, Reading, Writing, and British/American Literature for students who would become middle school English teachers in rural areas. Planned lessons; created worksheets, examinations, and other resource materials; and graded, filed, and kept accurate records of student work. Also responsible for classroom management and discipline for classes of up to fifty students each, public speaking and lecture preparation and presentation, and weekly office hours for student extra help and advising.
- Adapted and supplemented minimal/outdated textbook resources to create more relevant, stimulating, and practical classroom materials. Actively shared new materials, updated methodology, and educational theory with department supervisors, colleagues, and students.
- Established “World-Wise Schools” partnership with a New Jersey elementary school and collaborated with American teachers to promote a dynamic cultural exchange.
- Implemented and guided new format for weekly “English Corner” practice sessions in conjunction with student English Club.
- Maintained and increased volunteer-initiated English resource library and advised student management of the library.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2006** "Neither Here nor There: The Construction of Spatial Liminality at the Lotus Festival." Paper presented at *Pushing Boundaries: Extreme Folklore and Ethnomusicology*, Bloomington, Indiana.
- 2006** "Exhibition Reviews: 'Sounds From the Vault' and 'Staying in Tune.'" *Museum Anthropology* (29)1.
- 2006** "Music and Musical Instruments." In *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, 2 vols., ed. Josef Meri. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- 2005** "Cultural Resonance: Musical Instruments as Material Culture." Paper presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the American Musical Instrument Society. Winner of Frederick R. Selch Award for best student paper.
- 1994** "Music and Meaning: The Role of Drums and Rhythm in West Africa." *Monitor: The Journal of International Studies* (Spring 1994). Published by the College of William and Mary.

AWARDS

- 2001-06** Chancellor's Fellowship (MA/PhD)
Indiana University
- Merit-based five-year award and tuition
- 2005** Frederick R. Selch Award
American Musical Instrument Society
- Award for best student paper presented at annual meeting
- 2005** William E. Gribbon Memorial Award
American Musical Instrument Society
- Competitive merit award for conference travel and all expenses
- 2004** GPSO Fall Research Award
Graduate and Professional Student Organization, Indiana University
- 2004** William E. Gribbon Memorial Award
American Musical Instrument Society
- 1995** William and Mary Monroe Scholar Research Grant

FIELDWORK AND RESEARCH

- 2004-05** Dissertation fieldwork: "The 2005 Lotus World Music and Arts Festival: Processes of Production and the Construction of Spatial Liminality." Ethnographic investigation of the Lotus World Music and Arts Festival, Bloomington, Indiana.
- 2001-05** Significant coursework/training and practical experience in ethnographic research theory and methods. Fieldwork projects included oral interviews, audio and photographic

documentation, survey development and evaluation, and performance and exhibition reviews.

1995

Undergraduate research grant: Madagascar, one-month field study to research origins and use of the traditional *sodina* flute.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- American Association of Museums
- Society for Ethnomusicology
- American Musical Instrument Society